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ELLA BAKER AND THE SNCC:

GRASSROOTS LEADERSHIP AND POLITICAL ACTIVISM

IN A NONHIERARCHICAL ORGANIZATION

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ELLA BAKER AND THE SNCC:

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A Dissertation APPROVED FOR THE GRADUATE COLLEGE

BY

_____
Dr. Priscilla Griffith, Chair

_____
Dr. George Henderson

_____
Dr. Jiening Ruan

_____
Dr. Susan Smith-Nash

_____
Dr. Robert Terry

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ABSTRACT

She did not seek credit for what she did, but she received gratification from witnessing people who enjoyed seeing others grow and emerge into leaders. She was a visionary leader. She created a new story, one not known to individuals before and achieved success in conveying this story effectively to others.

This historical case study examined political activism and social movements as they relate to the life of Ella Baker and the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) in order to describe non-positional, grassroots leadership within a nonhierarchical organization that created social change in America. An examination of the life of Ella Baker and the organizational structure of the SNCC showed how women and men used non-traditional leadership roles to create, build, and maintain the momentum of a mass movement.

The study describes the leadership style of Ella Baker and the SNCC, thereby giving an alternative leadership style for schools and other organizations that are interested in restructuring their organizations to include full participation of all members. The study also describes the nature of community organizing in rural areas in America in the 1960s and clarified the process by which SNCC mobilized and transformed social structures. The study further describes the successes and constraints SNCC activists faced when they try to do so. Ella Baker and SNCC activists encouraged and supported emerging leadership among grassroots people.

In SNCC, both men and women worked side by side in rural America. Some of SNCC's successes were due to the work of the large number of Black

and White women in the organization. The study describes how SNCC promoted the development of leadership skills of the female activists and in doing so, the activists and local "Beloved Communities" were transformed.

Through the use of one semi-structured interview, archival, biographical, and scholarly materials, this study provides qualitative, historical data about group-centered leadership in a non-bureaucratic organization. Men and women will benefit from this study when they are ready to accept new ideas about leadership, full participation of organizational members, and change theory.

CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

The literature on community organizations and community participation recognizes the strong relationship between citizen participation and local democracy. People identifying with a group or organization share values and develop trusts, which are significant in establishing social capital and civic action (Gittell, Oretga-Bustamante, & Steffy, 2000). When there is association between people, social capital accumulates and leads to civic action. When members of a group or organization work together with common values and norms, they build networks and increase the strength of their social capital. Networks lead to the formation of coalitions, increase status, and increase power to influence decisions and public policy. When citizens work together, they can build political capital by votes or transform their groups or organizations into pressure groups (Gittell, 1998).

Numerous studies have emphasized the importance of institutionalized and interpersonal networks for successful mobilization (Freeman, 1979; Klandermans & Oegema, 1987; McAdam, 1988; Snow, Zurcher, & Eckland-Olson, 1980). Structures alone cannot mobilize individuals to act (Klandermans, 1986). How does mobilization work? Snow, Rochford, Worden, & Benford (1986) discuss four psychological processes that are necessary for encouraging and persuading people to join a group and work for a cause: Frame-bridging which involves giving information to people who are already predisposed to the cause. Frame-amplification places emphasis on the compatibility of the group's values and beliefs with those of potential members. This involves persuading people that their participation in the group is important and essential to achieve the

group's goal. Frame-extension occurs when the group extends its boundaries to include potential members' interests. Potential members' interests may not be a part of the group's goal, but it is a way for the group to get support and increase membership. Frame-transformation requires individuals to change and achieve consensus with the group's goals. Although the four processes have received a great deal of attention, Snow, Zurcher, & Eckland-Olson (1980) have called for further research to understand how mobilization works on a daily basis and to find out what type of person is likely to do this work. Dillard (2000) argues for a move beyond race/ethnicity and gender as biological constructions to more culturally engaged explanations of being human.

Qualities needed to run organizations are persistence and self-knowledge, willingness to take risks and accept losses, commitment, consistency, challenge, and a strong will to learn (Bennis & Nanus, 1977). Leadership courses and scholarly texts are suggesting that leadership students should not only learn from a text but learn in an organizational context. The organization should be used as a learning environment. Many successful leaders have learned organizational skills – acknowledging and sharing uncertainty, embracing error, responding to the future, and becoming interpersonally competent, for example, listening, nurturing, coping with value conflicts, and gaining self knowledge – by working in organizations.

An effective leader is a person with a passion for a cause larger than life; someone with a dream and a vision that will better society or some portion of it. If the leader is not passionate about the cause, he or she will not make the necessary courageous and difficult decisions to carry it into action (Larson 2002). To be passionate, courageous, make and carry out decisions, a leader must have values that are life giving to society. A

leader must also have intellectual drive, confidence, and humanity; a leader must be a good communicator, a planned organizer, and have great interpersonal skills (Bennis & Nanus, 1985; Kouzes & Posner, 1987). Many of these skills characterized female activists of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Female activists were not recognized as "leaders" in their time; however, we now recognize them and the contributions that they have made toward the transformation of American society. Although many women were married and raising families, they were involved in the struggle against racism, sexism, and oppression. These women shared skills such as courage, strength, and patience in the struggle for freedom and equality. Female activists were a source of inspiration. To read these women's stories we learn about the human mind – its reason and emotion. We focus on these women's visions and what they communicate to us. Their stories provide a map to our future and give us structures and themes that inspire and motivate people. Their stories give us valuable information about their history that might otherwise go unnoticed and unharvested (McLellan, 2004).

The most effective leaders are great storytellers. They create, fine-tune, and communicate their stories. This is important to leadership. Howard Gardner (1995) explains, "Leaders achieve their effectiveness chiefly through the stories they relate. Here I use the word relate rather than tell because presenting a story in words is but one way to communicate" (p. 9). In addition to communicating stories, leaders embody their stories. Without necessarily relating their stories in so many words or in a string of selected symbols, leaders convey their stories by the kinds of lives that they lead and, through example, seek to inspire in their followers (Gardner, 1995). Leaders must conduct their

lives in such a way that their embodiments must be clearly seen by the people they seek to inspire and influence.

Problem Statement

This historical study will examine political activism and social movements as they relate to the leadership style of an African American female and an organization. I propose to study Ella Baker and the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (referred to as the SNCC) in order to describe non-positional and grassroots leadership within a nonhierarchical organization to create social change in America.

The life and work of Ella Baker showed how women changed traditional leadership roles to create, build, and maintain the momentum of mass movements. Baker was an organizer and an advocate in African American activism and she used her invisibility to organize ordinary people to develop their potential. Baker was a behind the scene person. She did not seek the limelight. She did not demand the kind of leadership visibility that would have assured her a front place in the civil rights movement. She successfully organized people to take charge of their lives and fight a racist oppressive system. Baker's entire adult life was devoted to building organizations that worked for social change. However, Baker's name and the work that she has done are not widely known among Americans.

Baker's work started at a time "when few Americans were capable of taking a Black woman seriously as a political figure" (Payne, 1989, p. 885). Baker's family and community influenced her activism. She grew up in a family with a tradition of social consciousness. Her grandparents were former slaves who had owned the farm where they were once slaves. Baker grew up on her grandparents' farm listening to her

grandmother's stories about slave revolts. As a slave, her grandmother was almost whipped for refusing to marry a man chosen for her by the slave owner (Payne, 1989). Baker's grandfather tried to create a model Black community and mortgaged his farm after a flood to provide food for families who were affected by the flood. Baker's grandmother and mother were very independent women, women who held the community together, and women to whom others turned in time of need (Payne, 1989). Baker developed a sense for social justice early in life. Baker remembered her childhood as:

> A family socialism, a world in which food and tools and homes were shared, where informal adoption of children was taken for granted, a world with a minimal sense of hierarchy in terms of those who have, having the right to look down upon, or to evaluate as a lesser breed, those who didn't have. Your relationship to human beings was far more important than your relationship to the amount of money that you made (Payne, 1989, p. 886).

Baker offered a type of leadership that was prohibited at the time, but allowed us to see women's leadership and social activism in a society where Caucasian males dominated leadership. Through an analysis of Baker's micromobilization techniques and political ideology, this study will identify and describe:

(a) Baker's leadership style.

(b) Baker's theory of group-centered leadership.

(c) How the SNCC put group-centered leadership into action.

(d) Baker's political philosophy.

(e) Black feminist standpoint and its effect on Black women's leadership.

(f) Black women's political activism and leadership styles.

(g) Recommendations for women's leadership.

Research Questions

During the course of this research and analysis of data other questions may emerge, however, research questions that are relevant to an investigation of Ella Baker and the SNCC are:

1. What type of leadership did Ella Baker demonstrated?
2. In what historical context did Ella Baker organize the SNCC?
3. How did the SNCC under Baker's guidance, work toward bringing societal change in America?
4. What lessons can we learn about organizational leadership from Ella Baker and the SNCC?

Limitations of the Study

The limitations of this study are imposed by the focus of the work. When one undertakes historical research; one is often confronted with a dearth of respondents due to the passage of time. A majority of those involved with Ella Baker and the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) have died or have aged. Ella Baker, the subject of this study, has also died. Therefore, the information about the SNCC and Baker's participation in grassroots movements and non-positional leadership were unearthed in both archival documents and secondary research materials. This researcher is aware that some public documents that purport to be objective and accurate may contain built-in bias that she is not aware of and that this distortion may be unintentional. In some cases, social context of document production is difficult to reconstruct.

Some documents that were obtained from historical societies and libraries were not dated, print was not legible, and pages were not numbered or stapled together. Also, pages were missing in some documents that were more than forty years old. It was very difficult to read some of the documents because pages were not placed in sequential order and pages were missing. When some documents were copied, sentences were cut off at the sides. This researcher contacted libraries about the condition of the documents and was told the original documents were in the same condition.

Documents were costly and there was one occasion when a package with documents was mailed to the researcher and the package did not arrive at the destination. The researcher contacted the library and the documents were copied and mailed a second time. This researcher was billed for postage a second time. The time it took to get the documents is another factor to consider when working with archival documents. Once the libraries receive the order for documents and all monies were paid, the request for documents is placed in a queue—usually on a first come, first serve basis. Therefore it could take several months before a researcher receives documents. The longest time this researcher waited for documents was six months. Also documents can be bulky and difficult to transport.

Although this researcher had several leads about people with documents, it was very difficult to locate these people because people moved and there were no forwarding addresses, telephone numbers, or e-mail addresses. Also, some people were deceased.

Ella Baker, the subject of this study did not leave too many trails for researchers to follow. The nature of her contributions to the civil rights movement is the very thing that made that contribution very difficult to document. She did not accept formal

recognition for the work that she did. She did not bask in the limelight. She did not have a detailed account about the organizations that she participated in or the work that she did. She worked behind the scenes in a collective process. It is the way that she worked that made her work so difficult to document in this research. Due to this, information about some of the organizations that Baker participated in was gathered from one semi-structured interview, interviews that other researchers had conducted with Baker, biographies, and other secondary sources.

Part of the data collection is a semi-structured interview with one person associated with the civil rights movements, the SNCC, and Ella Baker. The interviewee's recollections and interpretations about the SNCC, Ella Baker, and civil rights events are subject to the limitations of human memory and bias. Because of the nature of this study, the findings may not be generalized to other studies of this nature.

Another limitation of this study is the actual nature of historical case studies. This type of study is time consuming. Most methods of collecting and analyzing data are time-consuming. In analyzing data, the researcher read every sentence very closely, for words and phrases that suggested all possible themes and/or categories that are worth exploring. A thorough analysis of case study data can be labor-intensive, depending on the level of the detail that is important. Also the vast amount of documents makes it very difficult to code.

Significance of the Study

Ella Baker lived a life that few African Americans are aware of today. That most students in college, middle, and high schools know very little about Ella Baker reminds

us how our history and collective past are distorted and sometimes forgotten. Baker has devoted more than 60 years to community activism. She worked with the major civil rights organizations and other groups to change American society. She brought a richness of experience to every organization and community that she worked in. She never sought the spotlight, but worked in the background urging poor Blacks to take on extraordinary tasks for a better way of life. Operating as a "free agent," she challenged the status quo and affected the lives of women and young people. Still very little is known about Ella Baker is important in itself because it reminds us once more of how little is known about our past.

When thinking about leadership and organizing, about movement building, and challenging injustices to change a social system for a better way of life, I think about the civil rights movement and in particular about Ella Baker and grassroots leadership. Black struggle in the 1950s and 1960s is part of the history of the United States. Black women's struggle also falls under the umbrella of Black struggle. Yet women like Ella Baker are rendered virtually invisible to all audiences. An investigation and examination of Ella Baker's leadership theory against traditional leadership theories will be carried out. I will investigate the formation, structure, and operation of a nonhierarchical organization to create social change. There will be an investigation to find out whether Baker's theories and the SNCC's organizational structure could affect the development of women, as well as the leadership of men and women in general. By examining Ella Baker and the SNCC, I can clarify the process by which movements can mobilize and transform social structures and the constraints that movements face when they try to do so.

During the civil rights movement, Black women were excluded from formal leadership positions. Black men assumed the visible leadership positions in many Black committees and social institutions, such as the church, political organizations, and intelligentsia. It was not that women were prevented from participating in important ways on committees; however, their participation options were limited. Women chaired committees and held office as secretaries; however, they could not be elected as presidents. This was not a stated fact; it was just understood. Although a few women were elected board members, most women activities were in the area of fund-raising, membership recruitment, and community welfare. Many women felt that any leadership role that they undertook was treated with a pat on the head. Ransby (2003) notes "Baker observed that the role of women in the church…was that of doing the things that the minister said he wanted to have done. It was not one in which they were credited with having creativity and initiative and capacity to carry out things" (p. 184). At mass meetings that were led by ministers, women's activities were acknowledged, however there was consensus that the ministers were the leaders and that they had authority to make decisions. Women executive committee members were not allowed to be part of the decision making team. Women's exclusion from formal leadership positions was prevalent in the civil rights movement (Robnett, 1996).

An Overview of Ella Baker

Ella Baker was born on December 13, 1903 in Norfolk Virginia. She was the second child of Blake and Georgianna Baker. In 1911, Ella and her family moved to Littleton, North Carolina to live nearer to her grandparents. In 1918, Ella attended secondary school and college at Shaw University in Raleigh, North Carolina. She

graduated from Shaw in 1927 and moved to New York. In the early 1930s, Baker married T. J Roberts. They were divorced in 1958. During 1930 to 1972 Baker worked in several jobs and civil rights organizations. Baker died on December 13, 1986 (Cantarow & Gushee-O'Malley, 1980; Ransby, 2003).

Ella Baker was an activist and organizer whose work touched the lives of many Americans. In the 1920s, Baker became an organizer for the Young Negroes Cooperative League in Harlem. In the 1940s, she worked as a field secretary and later the director of branches for the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). In the mid 1950s, Baker and two friends formed In Friendship. She was an organizer and acting executive director for the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC). By 1960, Baker helped direct the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC). Baker and SNCC coordinated the efforts of the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party at the 1964 Democratic National Convention in Atlantic City.

Ella Baker placed emphasis on organizing people to make decisions on issues that affect their lives. Baker's idea about organizing "is moving people in their thinking, their actions, and their relationship to one another from one place to the next" (Threadcraft, 2003, p. 56). She valued people. She did not forget about the individual. She wanted to know about each person's story and ambition. She felt that it was important to include each person in the decision-making process because each person had a contribution to make to the organization. This did not mean that everyone's idea would be taken. It simply meant that everyone was given a chance to be heard.

Baker was committed to group-centered leadership and not leader-centered leadership. Men like Walter White, NAACP president and Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.,

SCLC leader found Baker difficult to work with because she asserted herself and refused to be "wowed" by their authority. Baker (1968) stated, "And I had no such awe and would raise questions that I considered fundamental to both the concept of organization and the plight of people involved in the organization" (p. 37). Baker questioned, criticized, and challenged these two leaders to help poor Blacks, especially those in the Black Belt, who were struggling daily against racial oppression. Baker went wherever there was a need. She said, "In my organizational work, I have never thought in terms of my making a contribution. I just thought of myself as functioning where there was a need. And if I have made a contribution I think it may be that I had some influence on a large number of people (Baker, 1972, p. 346).

Baker was an important figure in the civil rights movement, but information about her life and work were only found in a few interviews. Both Black and White historians have neglected to tell her story. It is only recently that detailed accounts of her work have appeared in two full-length scholarly biographies, Joanne Grant's (1998) *Ella Baker Freedom Bound* and Barbara Ransby's (2003) *Ella Baker & the Black Freedom Movement, A Radical Democratic vision.*

An Overview of the SNCC

When the sit-in movement among Black college students first started in 1960, Ella Baker used her extensive list of contacts and networks to help it spread (Payne, 1989). Baker talked the SCLC into sponsoring a meeting of activist students on the campus of her alma mater, Shaw University. The meeting was held on Easter weekend in 1960 and the SNCC came into being (Payne, 1989). The three main Black civil rights organizations, Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC), the National

Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) and the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) had representatives at the meeting. Baker wanted the students to remain independent and she played a major role in pressing students to assert their independence. She warned students that others would try to manipulate them for their own ends and that students "had the right to direct their own affairs and even make their own mistakes" (Weisbrot, 1991, p. 34). These words encouraged the students who decided against affiliating with the established civil rights groups. Baker and the students had similar philosophical views, ideas, and commitment about the development of group strength.

By 1961 SNCC was the kind of organization that Baker had been trying to create for years. SNCC members went into rural areas the other established civil rights groups were not eager to go into. SNCC was open to the participation of both women and youths that the established civil rights groups did not encourage. Added to this, the SNCC did not follow a centralized and rigid bureaucracy and insisted that leadership had to be discovered and developed at the local levels (Payne, 1989). In the book *In Struggle: SNCC and the Black Awakening of the 1960s*, Claybourne Carson notes "Baker's notion of 'group-centered leadership' had taken hold among student activists, and they strongly opposed any hierarchy of authority such as existed in other civil rights organizations" (p. 24). Bernice Reagon (1979) notes that the struggle for the civil rights was the "borning" struggle of the decade, the struggle that helped generate and give form to many of the era's battles for social justice. Payne (1989) reflects that the SNCC may be regarded as the "borning" organization more than any other organization, however it is difficult to see how SNCC would have come into existence without Ella Baker.

At the very beginning of its inception, the SNCC had a few hundred dedicated members. This dedication was made possible by the SNCC's ability to generate a strong sense of community among its members. Each member felt that his or her contribution was worthwhile. However, the decline of the SNCC as a powerful civil rights organization in 1964 came about because of the rapid growth of membership in the organization. The rapid growth led to deterioration in the quality of relationships and the development of political ideas and groups within the organization.

Key Terms and Definitions

In this study, definitions for the following terms are taken from the scholarly research studies, journals, and books, as indicated.

Throughout this study, African American is used interchangeably with Black women, Black men, Negroes, and Nonwhites, and Caucasian is used interchangeably with White women and White men depending on the particular/specific period and situation addressed. Also, Black feminist writer bell hooks' name is written with lowercase b and h. This researcher will show respect for the author by writing the author's name the same way.

Afrocentric Standpoint

Black societies, despite different histories, reflect elements of a core African value system that existed before and independent of racial oppression. As a result of colonialism, imperialism, slavery, apartheid, and other racial domination, Blacks share a common experience of oppression. These similarities have fostered shared Afrocentric

values that spread through religious institutions, family structure, culture, and community life of Blacks in Africa, the Caribbean, North America, and South America.

Black Feminism

"Black feminism is a process of self-conscious struggle that empowers women and men to actualize a humanist vision of community" (Hill-Collins, 1990, p. 39).

Black Feminist Thought

Black feminist thought consists of a specialized knowledge created by African-American women, which clarifies a standpoint of and for Black women (Patricia Hill-Collins, 2000).

Black Woman's Standpoint

Two interlocking components characterize Black woman's standpoint. "First, the unpaid and paid work that Black women perform, the types of communities in which they live, and the kinds of relationships they have with others suggest that African-American women, as a group, experience a different world than those who are not Black and female. Second, these experiences stimulate a distinctive Black feminist consciousness concerning that material reality" (Hill-Collins, 1989, p. 748).

Bridge Leaders

Sociologist Belinda Robnett coined the term bridge leaders. Bridge leaders are grassroots leaders who frequently move from one community to another, connecting the needs of the people with the goals and objectives of the movement or organization. Bridge leaders could be men or women, but are primarily women. Women who are capable of being formal leaders and who are frequently excluded and tended to concentrate their work in areas perceived as support work. Bridge leaders were frequently

seen in the civil movement during the 1940s to 1970s (Collier-Thomas & Franklin, 2001).

Formal Leaders

This term refers to "actors who occupy organizational offices which entail power and who also have personal power over subordinates" (Robnett, 1996, p. 1665).

Grassroots Leadership

This type of leadership encourages the development of indigenous leaders to create a peoples movement without dominating the organization (Forman, 1972).

It is a group-centered organization rather than a leader-centered organization with organizers integrating themselves informally into communities with the intention of empowering grassroots people and encouraging their initiative, involvement, and leadership (Umoja, 1999).

"Being free from any constraining political affiliations and being responsible to no authority except their own" (Ackelsberg, 2001, p. 408).

Group-Centered Leadership

Group-centered leadership is leadership in which the ego needs of leaders are placed beneath the developmental needs of the group. It requires leaders who can deal nondestructively with their own need and recognition (Payne, 1989, p. 896).

Informal Leaders

This term refers to "actors within the organization who have personal but not official power over lower participants" (Robnett, 1996, p. 1665).

Jim Crow Laws

Jim Crow Laws mandated the segregation of public accommodations in America's southern states. The laws circumscribed and eliminated Black residents' access to public facilities. Blacks were forced to defer to Whites in all aspects of public life resulting in the humiliation and inhumane treatment of Blacks by Whites (Ransby, 2003).

Leadership

"Leadership is a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal" (Northouse, 2004, p. 3).

"Leadership is 'causative,' meaning that leadership can invent and create institutions that can empower employees to satisfy their needs. Leadership is morally purposeful and elevating, which means, if nothing else, that leaders can, through deploying their talents, choose purposes and visions that are based on the key values of the workforce and create the social architecture that supports them. Finally, leadership can move followers to higher degrees of consciousness, such as liberty, freedom, justice, and self-actualization" (Bennis & Nanus, 1997, p. 202).

Mobilization

The term refers to a service or action taken by a person or group of people to accomplish some collective goal in a specific time.

Nonhierarchical Organization

In a nonhierarchical organization, there is a collective leadership style due to the group-centered approach and organization; and movement decisions are made collectively and democratically. Even if strong personalities exist within the organization,

it is unusual for any of its leaders' ideas and proposals to be accepted without challenge or question. The secular and democratic nature of a nonhierarchical organization can empower the active membership, and workers of the organization can transform the organization more rapidly from below than a leader-centered organization (Umoja, 1999).

Organization

"A group that has stated and formal goals" (Hersey, Blanchard, & Johnson, 2001, p. 319).

Race

"Racism is a marker for ethnicity, shared history and culture, and a sense of peoplehood, and it represents exposure to structural inequality and the indignities associated with racial discrimination" (Hunter & Sellers, 1998, p. 86).

Race is artificially and arbitrarily contrived to produce and maintain relations of power and subordination (Brooks Higginbotham, 1992).

Social Activism

Social activism refers "to activities that are aimed at changing or reforming society rather than to activities that focus on helping individuals" (Faver, 2001, p. 319).

Overview of Dissertation

In chapter one, I have provided an introduction, description of the problem, limitations of the study, and a brief overview of Ella Baker and the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC). This is a historical case study on grassroots leadership and political activism in a non-hierarchical organization to create social change in America as demonstrated by Ella Baker and the SNCC.

This dissertation will be presented in eight chapters. In chapter two, I will present the method. In chapter three, I will define leadership, give a brief history of the evolution of leadership, and present the leadership styles of three African American males. Chapter four is a discussion on different organizational theories and ways of thinking about organizations with an argument for an alternative organizational model for African Americans. Chapter five is a presentation of the following topics: Racism and Class Discrimination, Feminist Theory, Black Feminist Standpoint, Ella Baker and Feminism, The Black Church, The Role of Black Women in the Black Church, African American Women's Leadership, and African-American Women in the Civil Rights Movement. I will explain how African American women's experiences and issues shaped Black feminist theory. Black feminist theory and Black women's culture will be used in the discussion of African American women's leadership styles. Chapter six is a discussion on the significance of Baker's life. Chapter seven is the case for Ella Baker and the SNCC. In this chapter, archival and primary and secondary materials will be used to show Baker's leadership style and theory of group-centered leadership, as well as show how the SNCC put group-centered leadership in action. Chapter eight is the conclusion of this study with recommendations and implications for women's leadership.

CHAPTER TWO – METHOD

Introduction

Ella Baker was not dedicated to one philosophy of social change; rather she believed that organization could radically affect society. "She combined the Black Baptist missionary values of charity, humility, and service with the economic theories of Marxists and Socialists of various stripes who advocated redistribution of wealth and a transfer of power from capitalist elites to the poor working classes" (Ransby, 2003, p. 95). She believed that this could be accomplished on community level. She used her childhood experiences and the influence of her Harlem background to formulate a theory for organizing. Baker claimed:

> I think the nearest thing to an answer is having people understand their position and understand their potential power and how to use it. This can only be done in, as I see it, through the long route, almost of actually organizing people in small groups and parlaying those into larger groups (Knocks, 2002, p. 169).

Ella Baker's theories centered on the idea of grassroots leadership. Although she appreciated the role of religion in African American Community, she recognized that preachers had powerful roles. She also recognized that a central figure often placed more emphasis on their own public development, instead of the development of the total community (Baker, 1968).

Throughout Ella Baker's adult life she was involved in organizations like the Young Negro Cooperative League (YNCL), National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC), and Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC). Baker's political life could not be limited to one organization and her experiences in some of these organizations radically

altered her ideas on leadership and the roles of women in the American Society (Taitt-Magubane, 2007). Ella Baker brought her ideas to community organizations and subsequently altered the organization of the Civil Rights movement.

This is a historical case study of Ella Baker, founder of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee, one of a number of civil rights organizations that helped bring dramatic change to life in the United States in the twentieth century.

The Case Study

For many years, researchers have used the case study research method across a wide variety of disciplines. Social scientists have made use of this qualitative research method to examine contemporary real-life situations and provide the basis for the application of ideas and extension of methods.

There are several ways to define case study research. Yin's (1994) definition of case study is "an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident" (p. 13). Where Yin looked at the research process, Stake (1994) focused on the unit of study, which in itself is the case. Merriam (1988) defined case study as an end product: "A qualitative case study is an intensive, holistic description and analysis of a single instance, phenomenon, or social unit" (p. 21). Wolcott (1992) agreed with Merriam because he too defined case study as an end product of field-oriented research instead of a strategy or method (Merriam, 1998). To enhance the understanding of case study, Smith (1978) defined case study as a bounded system. Stake's (1995) notion that "the case is an integrated system" makes case study a single unit around

which there are boundaries (Merriam. 1998). Miles and Huberman (1994) defined case study as "a phenomenon of some sort occurring in a bounded context" (p. 25). They presented this information graphically as a circle with a heart in the center. The circle will not be studied because it is the edge of the case and the heart is the focus of the study (Merriam, 1998). If the phenomenon that is being studied is not bounded then it is not a case. These definitions contribute to the general understanding of case study research.

Other writers have advanced definitions of the case study. Wilson (1979) defines the case study as a process "which tries to describe and analyze some entity in qualitative, complex, and comprehensible terms not infrequently as it unfolds over a period of time" (p. 448). Cronbach (1975) referred to case study as "interpretation in context" (p. 123). This researcher defines case study as an intensive, holistic examination of a person, issue, or event in a geographic setting over time. The issue, person, or event that is being investigated must be fenced in. Prior development of theoretical propositions will guide data collection and analysis and multiple sources of evidence are necessary for the triangulation of data. This case study is an intensive, holistic examination of Ella Baker and the SNCC. The data will reveal the group-centered, grassroots leadership and organizational styles of Baker and the SNCC.

The Historical Case Study

The historical case study distinguishes between technique and account. The nature of the account also distinguishes historical case studies. The historical case study may involve much more than a chronological history of an event. The key to historical case studies is the notion of investigating phenomena over a period of time (Merriam, 1998).

The researcher must present a holistic description and analysis of the specific phenomena (the case), but present it from a holistic perspective. Yin (1994) discusses the elements of historical research and case study:

> Histories are the preferred strategy when there is virtually no access or control. Thus, the distinctive contribution of the historical method is in with the "dead" past—that is, when no relevant persons are alive to report, even retrospectively, what occurred, and when an investigator must rely on primary documents, secondary documents, and cultural and physical artifacts as the main sources of evidence. Histories can, of course, be done about contemporary events; in this situation, the strategy begins to overlap with that of the case study.
>
> The case study is preferred in examining contemporary events, but when the relevant behaviors cannot be manipulated. Thus, the case study relies on many of the same techniques as a history, but it adds two sources of evidence not usually included in the historian's repertoire: direct observation and systematic interviewing. Again, although case studies and histories can overlap, the case study's unique strength is its ability to deal with a full variety of evidence—documents, artifacts, interviews, and observations—beyond what might be available in the conventional history study (p. 8).

Restating the Problem

I propose to study Ella Baker and the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) in order to describe grassroots leadership and political activism within a nonhierarchical organization to create social change in America. The proposed research questions that this historical case study seeks to answer are:

1. What type of leadership did Ella Baker demonstrate?
2. In what historical context did Ella Baker organize the SNCC?
3. How did the SNCC under Baker's guidance, work toward bringing societal change in America?
4. What lessons can be learned about organizational leadership and women's leadership

from Ella Baker and the SNCC?

Selecting Ella Baker

Black Women's Historiography

Historically, the majority of Black working women in American society was confined to work in agriculture or domestic service. However, Black women, in very diverse lives, interests, and activities have campaigned for improvement in the working conditions of all Black women. Some writers offer useful information to help us understand Black women's history and Black women's work. K. Sue Jewell's (1993) *From Mammy to Miss America and Beyond* focuses on a concern that has historically been very important to Black women: protecting themselves from the negative imagery of Blacks in American society that arises from the racial caste system. It is an ideology that the mass media produced and designed to maintain Black women's position as the lowest members of the social hierarchy. Jewell explains that the failure of social policies to elevate Black women and Black community is used by some Whites to advance the notion that Blacks are incapable of elevation even with federally funded social assistance. These cultural images of Black women characterize them as less worthy of society benefits.

In the production of her biography on *Lugenia Hope (1992)*, Jacqueline Anne Rouse places her subject within a group of Southern middle-class women that include Mary McLeod Bethune of Florida, Lucy Laney of Georgia, Charlotte Hawkins Brown of North Carolina, Nettie N. Napier of Tennessee, Margaret Murray Washington, and Jennie Morton of Alabama. In spite of Jim Crow, these Black women were dedicated to the

moral, cultural, educational, economic, and spiritual up-light of their less disadvantaged sisters. According to Rouse, "these reformers saw their tradition and heritage as demanding commitment, responsibility, accountability, authority, self-respect, self-sufficiency, racial pride and solidarity and a strong sense of *noblesse oblige*" (p. 7).

Cynthia Neverdon-Morton's (1991) study *Afro-American Women of the South and the Advancement of the Race*, *1895-1925* is an examination of Black women in the Black academy at the turn of the century. The subject of Neverdon-Morton's study is the response of Black women to discrimination in the South. Social class, defined by education, income, urban or rural residence, and occupation, divided Black women living in the South. However, Black women, regardless of class were subject to humiliation and physical harm in the Jim Crow era. They also faced the same issues in their communities because the economic issues of Jim Crow prevented Black men from providing for their families. Faced with these issues, Black women focused on home, family, health care, religious training, moral training, the needs of working Black women, social justice, and education. The last chapter of this book examined the work of Southern Black women in the National Association of Colored Women (NACW), National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), National Urban League (NUL), Commission on International Cooperation (CIC), and Young Women Christian Association (YWCA).

Righteous Discontent: The Women's Movement in the Black Baptist Church, 1880-1920 (1993) by Evelyn Brooks Higginbotham is a historical study of the founding, institutional structure, and legacy of Black women in the National Baptist Convention, U.S.A. The author states that it was Black women who made the Black church the most powerful institution during the period.

These studies explored Black women's historiography and expand our knowledge of the African American experience and the American experience as well. The studies encourage further research in areas like Black women's religious and secular activism; Black women's roles in interracial diversity among Black women and their roles in interracial organizations; and Black women's participation in the civil rights movement.

After reading these studies, I thought about women and organizations that I might investigate to provide a model for teachers, educational leaders, and other organizational leaders who might consider non-bureaucratic leadership styles. I decided to study a female leader in the civil rights movement who placed great emphasis on social reform issues as change agents for a better way of life for all African Americans; a female leader who worked with an organization and together they analyzed, advocated, and agitated for the necessary conditions for African American equality in a democratic country.

Narrowing My Focus

African American women were actively involved in the struggle for civil rights. As evidence, they provided meals, developed young leaders, and supported each other as they functioned and performed the movement's work (Gyant, 1996). Rather than choosing a male leader in the civil rights movement for study, I chose Ella Baker as a leader who did not exercise power over those who worked with her within the civil rights movement. She strongly believed in people leading themselves. Baker's role was to empower those with whom she worked.

From my readings, I created a list of American women activists/social reform leaders for study, as I was not sure which woman I would select. Baker was chosen from this list, which is now presented.

Jo Ann Gibson Robinson – civil rights movement

Lucretia Mott – feminist, abolitionists

Septima Clark – civil rights movement

Unita Blackwell – civil rights movement

Susan B. Anthony – legal rights for women

Jane Addams **–** Hull House, civil rights

Ella Baker – civil rights movement: NAACP, SCLC, SNCC

Elizabeth Cady Stanton - feminist

Prudence Crandall – teacher, abolitionist

Eleanor Roosevelt - activist

Fannie Lou Hamer – civil rights movement

Rosa Parks – civil rights movement

Sarah Parker Remond – lecturer

Maria Chapman Weston - abolitionist

Mother Jones – activist in labor movement

Mary Anderson – the Woman's Bureau

Sarah Grimke – abolitionist

Angelina Grimke **–** abolitionist

Angela Davis – civil rights movement

Sojourner Truth – former slave, abolitionist, feminist

Ann Braden – civil rights movement

Ruby Doris Smith Robinson – civil rights movement, SNCC

Nannie Helen Burroughs – educator and activist

Dr. Matilda Evans – doctor, civil rights activist

Casey Hayden – civil rights movement

Mary King – civil rights movement

Sandra Casey Carson – civil rights movement, YWCA

Jane Stembridge – civil rights movement, SNCC

The above list is made up of a group of women who are in their own rights organizational leaders in social reform movements. Hence I have created two boundaries. My first two boundaries are (a) organizational leaders and (b) women leaders in social reform movements. Scholars have stated that most research on leadership investigated leaders in organizations that are hierarchically structured and there is a great need to investigate nontraditional leaders (e.g. grassroots leaders) in nonhierarchical organizations (e.g. grassroots organizations). Research studies should not focus solely on elected leaders or leaders in large well-known corporations; they should also focus on leaders who exercise a collective type of leadership in nonhierarchical structured organizations. This recommendation and the recommendation of Dr. George Henderson who advised me to narrow my focus, led me to the next boundary, which is the twentieth century civil rights movement. As a result of the activism of men and women in the civil rights movement, significant social changes took place in the United States in the twentieth century. Based on the recommendation of leadership as collective action, I chose Ella Baker because she is the best example of this type of leadership.

I now propose a single bounded case study which was defined earlier in this chapter by Stake (1995) and Miles and Huberman (1994); the largest boundary of the study is organizational leaders, within that is women leaders in social reform movements,

followed by twentieth century civil rights movement, within that, the grassroots organizing of Ella Baker and the SNCC in the period 1960 to 1964.

Data Collection and Analysis

Snow, Zurcher, and Eckland-Olson (1980) made a call for further research to find out how mobilization works on a daily basis and what type of person is most likely to succeed at mobilizing people to join a group and getting them to actively participate in community leadership. Dillard (2000) calls for research that will move beyond race, ethnicity, and gender as biological constructions to culturally engaged explanations of human beings. I chose to take up the challenge that Snow et al (1980) and Dillard (2000) proposed.

Steps for Finding Relevant Documents

Merriam (1998) provides the following steps for finding relevant documents.

1. The first step in the process is finding relevant material to analyze.
2. Once documents are located authenticity must be assessed. Since the documents were not originally produced for this research, the researcher must reconstruct the process by which the documents/data were originally assembled for someone else.

   Questions asked about authenticity of documents:

   - What is the history of the document?
   - How did it come into my hands?
   - What guarantee is there that it is what it pretends to be?
   - Is the document complete, as originally constructed?
   - Has it been tampered with or edited?

- If the document is genuine, under what circumstances and for what purposes was it produced?
- Who was/is the author?
- What were the maker's sources of information? Does the document represent an eyewitness account, a secondhand account, a reconstruction of an event long prior to the writing, an interpretation?
- What was or is the maker's bias?
- To what extent was the writer likely to want to tell the truth?
- Do other documents exist that might shed additional light on the same story, event, project, program, and context? If so, are they available, accessible? Who holds them?

3. Determine accuracy of the documents.
4. For historical studies, group documents into primary or secondary sources.
5. After assessing authenticity and nature of documents, the researcher must adopt a system of coding and cataloging documents. Establish basic descriptive categories early on for coding.

Although documents have limitations, they are a good source of data because many documents are easily available and contain information that would take a researcher a great deal of time to gather. Because this is a historical case study of Ella Baker and the SNCC, the data collection tools for this project included (1) a taped interview, (2) archival and biographical documents, and (3) scholarly books and articles. Locating relevant archival documents was the first step in the process of data collection for this study. Guba and Lincoln (1981) state, "The first and most important injunction to

anyone looking for official records is to presume that if an event happened some record of it exists" (p. 253). Williams (1978) suggests a form of reconstructed logic for the researcher to carry out the investigation. Williams states:

> The veteran has ingrained within himself a special type of reasoning. He knows how things normally work. If he observes a phenomenon, and effect, he wonders what caused it. He develops a hypothesis and begins checking it against observable facts. He works to back up the chain of facts, searching information that will either support or negate his hypothesis. He tries different combinations of conflicting versions of a story until he finds the one in which salient points overlap (p. 13).

This researcher followed the proposal given by Guba (1978a, cited in Guba and Lincoln, 1981) for tracking documents.

> If one knows how things work, and if one suspects that a certain action has occured, one can imagined what tracks it must be leaving; one then looks for tracks, which have been 'warping and weaving' with the other circumstances of the matter, and one usually finds them, if they exist at tall (p. 253).

Guba points out that for an investigative journalist, the reconstruction and verification of the tracks are very important because it is by that process that the investigative journalist is able to manage his tasks, provide direction to his research, and can stop when he knows that he has reached a point where he does not need any more information.

Collecting Primary and Secondary Documents

Finding relevant documents is usually a systematic procedure that evolves from the topic of inquiry. The most natural places to look for archival and biographical material are libraries, historical societies, archives, and institutional files. Once documents were located and their authenticity assessed, the researcher attended to the documents and made a distinction between documents that are primary or secondary sources. "Primary sources are those in which the originator of the document is recounting firsthand experience with the phenomenon of interest" (Merriam, 1998, p. 122). Most

personal documents and eyewitness accounts of social phenomena are considered primary sources. “Secondary sources are reports of a phenomenon by those who have not directly experienced the phenomenon of interest; these are often compiled at a later date” (Merriam, 1998, p. 122). However there are cases where the same documents have been classified as primary or secondary depending on the purpose of the study.

Primary and secondary documents are archival and biographical materials, copies of interviews, newspaper reports, books, magazines, journal articles, dissertations, and eyewitness account that give specific information on the person and events that are being investigated.

Assessing Authenticity of the Documents

Relevant documents are rich and rewarding resources that give stability for this research. The obvious places that this researcher searched for relevant documents were libraries, historical societies, newspapers, and individuals who participated in civil rights activities with Ella Baker and the SNCC. Although documents that are stored in libraries and historical societies were easy to track down, other documents, such as, those that are in the possession of individuals were not easily accessible. Once documents were located, the researcher sent e-mails to document holders to introduce herself and requested copies of the documents. This was followed by telephone calls to discuss fees for documents and postage.

The documents used for data collection were not written for this study. Some of the documents were produced for biographies, books, documentaries, and articles on Ella Baker and the SNCC. The documents provided important data for studying, analyzing, and understanding the leadership style of Ella Baker and the SNCC. The documents

provided exact names, references, details of events, and broad coverage of the events and setting. Some documents were private papers on Ella Baker and SNCC that were gifted to the Schomburg Center for Black Studies by Joanne Grant, Ella Baker's biographer and Jacqueline Brockington, Baker's niece. Other documents came from the civil rights collection at the Schomburg Center for Black Studies and the Wisconsin Historical Society. The interview transcripts were part of the Oral History Program and the Civil Rights Documentation Project. The documents represented eyewitness and second hand accounts and were written or transcribed by SNCC activists in the field, reputable historians, biographers, and authors.

"The most important principle of historical scholarship is the principle of importance of context" (Clark, 1967, p. 25). In analyzing the documents this researcher took into account the situations at the moment in time when the events took place and the moment that the events were recorded. All documents were triangulated to ensure accuracy of events. Triangulation was very useful for verifying information of the same events from different documents and sources. Webb, Sechrest, and Campbell (1996) state:

> Once a proposition has been confirmed by two or more important measurement processes, the uncertainty of its interpretation is greatly reduced. The most persuasive evidence comes through a triangulation of measurement processes. If a proposition can survive the onslaught of a series of imperfect measures, with all their relevant error, confidence should be placed in it (p. 3).

Collecting Data

This study employed two data collection techniques—conducting and analyzing one semi-structured telephone interview (See Appendix A), and analyzing primary and secondary documents. The researcher contacted the interviewee by email and telephone

to determine if the interviewee would participate in the study. The interview was conducted on a mutually agreed date and time between the researcher and the interviewee. The interviewee could stop the interview at any time. The interview was audiotaped and transcribed by the researcher. Transcription was a slow process that involved listening to the tape carefully, writing, reading, and reviewing the tape and transcript to ensure that the interview was documented correctly by the researcher. The advantage of having the researcher transcribed the tape was closer supervision of the transcription process.

A major strength of case study data collection is the opportunity to use different sources of evidence. Different sources of evidence allowed this researcher to address and understand the historical issues and other events that took place. One of the most important advantages of using multiple sources of evidence is the use of triangulation, which makes the conclusion of this case study more accurate and convincing, based on the corroboration of the different sources. This researcher checked documents and sources for refutation and confirmation. Due to triangulation, more confidence was placed in the data generated by different documents and sources. By using a combination of interview, and primary and secondary documents, the researcher was able to validate and crosscheck findings.

Coding Documents

After assessing authenticity and making a distinction about the documents collected, this researcher adopted a system for coding and cataloging documents. By establishing descriptive categories early for coding, this researcher had easy assess to information in the analysis and interpretation.

Glaser and Strauss (1999) direct attention to two general approached to the analysis of qualitative data: (1) coding the data first and analyzing it by systematically assembling, assessing, and analyzing the data in a way that will "constitute proof for a given proposition" (p. 101), and (2) generating theory by constantly redesigning and reintegrating theoretical notions as data are reviewed. The researcher must inspect the data for new properties of the theoretical categories and write memos on the properties. This makes coding and analyzing data an inappropriate method of analysis.

Glaser and Strauss (1999) point to another approach in the analysis of qualitative data that this researcher found interesting and undertook in this research. The approach is one that combines, by an analytic procedure of constant comparison, the coding procedure of the first approach and the style of theory development of the second approach. The purpose of the constant comparative method of joint coding and analysis is to generate theory. Data will be explicitly coded and at the same time jointly analyzed enough to generate theory (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). While the study is to be primarily explanatory and descriptive, I also hope to offer some theoretical explanations.

The Constant Comparative Method

The constant comparative method works in four stages: (1) comparing incidents applicable to each category, (2) integrating categories and their properties, (3) delimiting the categories, and (4) writing the theory (Glaser & Strauss, 1999).

(1) Comparing incidents applicable to each category

The researcher codes each incident in the data into many categories of analysis, as categories emerge or as data emerge that fit an existing category. Coding is done on cards to keep track of comparison group in which the incident occurs. A basic rule for the

constant comparative method: *"While coding an incident for a category, compare it with the previous incidents in the same and different groups coded in the same category"* (Glaser & Strauss, 1999, p. 106). For example, as the researcher codes an incident, the researcher compares this incident, before further coding, with others previously coded in the same category. This constant comparison of incidents will generate theoretical properties about the range of the category to include, "its dimension, the conditions under which it is pronounced or minimized, its major consequences, its relationship to other categories, and its properties" (Glaser & Strauss, 1999, p. 106). As categories and their properties emerge, other categories that were not constructed by the researcher will emerge. As theory develops, the researcher will notice that the concepts taken from the substantive situation will tend to be current labels in use for the actual processes and behaviors that are to be explained while the concepts developed by the researcher will be the explanations. Conflicting thoughts may arise when a category is coded three to four times. When this happens, use the second rule for the constant comparison method: "*Stop coding and record a memo on your ideas"* (Glaser & Strauss, 1999, p. 107). This rule should help the researcher reflect on thoughts about the theory and data to reach a conclusion.

(2) Integrating categories and their properties

As coding progresses, the constant comparative units change from comparison of incident with incident to comparison of incident with properties of the category that resulted from initial comparisons of incidents (Glaser & Strauss, 1999). Constant comparison causes the knowledge pertaining to a property of the category to become integrated in many different ways, resulting in a unified whole (Glaser & Strauss, 1999).

(3) Delimiting the theory

According to Glaser and Strauss (1999), delimiting occurs at two levels: the theory and the categories. As the theory solidifies, there are fewer modifications as the researcher compares an incident of a category to its properties. Modifications can be made to clarify logic, take out properties that are not relevant, and integrate details of properties in the outline of interrelated properties. Through reduction of terminology, theory could be generalized so that it pertains, for example, to non-positional/grassroots leadership. With the reduction of terminology, the researcher starts to achieve "parsimony of variables and formulation" and "scope in the applicability of the theory to a wide range of situations" (Glaser & Strauss, 1999, p. 111). The second level for delimiting the theory is by reducing the list of categories for coding. The researcher can become more selective and cut down on the list of categories for collecting and coding data, devoting more time to the smaller categories that are more applicable for the research (Strauss & Corbin, 1998).

(4) Writing theory

The researcher possesses coded data, a series of memos, and a theory. The content behind the categories are in the memos. The content is the discussions that the researcher wrote on memos. The categories and content are the major themes of the theory that will be presented in the research study (Glaser & Strauss, 1999).

The constant comparison of data tends to results in the creation of "developmental" theory (Glaser & Strauss, 1999, p. 114). This method facilitates the generation of theories of process, sequence, and change pertaining to organizations, positions, and social interactions. In comparing incidents, the researcher sees the

categories develop and change in relation to other categories. This process of comparing each incident with other incidents or with properties of a category forces the researcher to look closely at the diversity in the data.

Summary

In chapter two, a description is given of the research method: a historical case study of the leadership style of Ella Baker and the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee. Credibility was given for choosing a historical case study. The research questions under investigation in this study were restated. The researcher discussed how Baker was chosen as the subject for this study from among American female activists. A summary of Black women's historiography is included to support choosing Baker. Proposals for data collection and analysis were presented to include steps for finding relevant documents, coding documents, and analyzing the data.

CHAPTER THREE – LEADERSHIP

Introduction

The study of history has been the study of leaders—what leaders did, how they did it, and why they did it. For several years, formulating principles of leadership spread from the study of history and its philosophy to developing social sciences (Bass, 1990). Philosophical principles about leadership emerged very early. In 2300 B.C., the Instruction of Ptahhotep attributed three leadership qualities to Pharaoh. In the sixth century B.C., the Chinese classics presented specific leadership advice to the country's leaders. Greek leadership is exemplified in Homer's Iliad, Agamemnon's justice and judgment, Nestor's wisdom and counsel, Odysseus' shrewdness and cunning, and Achilles' valor and activism (Bass, 1990). Plato's ideal leader of the ideal state was an important person who was educated to rule with order and reason. On the other hand, Aristotle was alarmed by the lack of virtue among leaders and referred for the need to educate young men to become leaders (Bass 1990).

The quest for power has dominated human history. Niccolo Machiavelli, a political advisor to nobles during the early sixteenth century, wrote one of the earliest works on the management of leadership and power. Machiavelli's *The Prince And the Discourses*, 1950 is in reality a handbook advising an autocratic leader how to acquire and maintain power and security. Machiavelli was aware of foreign threats to Italian autonomy and saw it necessary and important for a strong prince to head the state and thwart any adversary from taking over Italy. In *The Prince And The Discourses,* Machiavelli described two main types of governments: principalities and republics. Machiavelli focused more on principalities and true princes.

The Prince And The Discourses is a blueprint for tyranny because it calls for a state ruler to pursue his own personal power. Machiavelli laid out a set of principles that would help nobles maintain their leadership and control over their people. Machiavelli explores a harsh, yet realistic perception of a strong political leader by recommending decisive, calculated authority, minimal sharing of wealth, and exploitation of human nature. At the time *The Prince And The Discourses* was written, education and intellectual enlightenment were only for the elite. The common people (the masses) were enslaved by their limitations and were controlled by their simple everyday needs (Machiavelli, 1950). Machiavelli justifies the leader's ability to exploit the masses by suggesting that the masses should be manipulated for the common good. Machiavelli recommended leadership tactics designed to reinforce the natural hierarchy of the elite to the lower classes.

One of Machiavelli's major themes in *The Prince and the Discourses* is that a leader should present a face to his people that is unwavering in its control but can also be perceived as a just and unbiased judge. In his description of the two faces a leader must exhibit, Machiavelli suggests liberality is essential, for without it a ruler "would not be followed by his soldiers" (Machiavelli, p. 59). On the other hand Machiavelli is stern in his belief that once power is achieved, the leader should change course and be more conservative in allocating his personal wealth in order not to squander his means of control. In being more conservative with his own wealth, a leader must continue the appearance of liberality and spend others' wealth freely because "spending the wealth of others will not diminish your reputation, but increase it" (Machiavelli, p. 59). The farce

of being a liberal while maintaining a frugal private life reflects a dishonest side of a leader, but is effective in maintaining control and respect of both the haves and have-nots.

The leadership that Niccolo Machiavelli puts forward in *The Prince And the Discourses* is unlike the leadership style of Ella Baker. Baker was a harsh critic of capitalism and had an innovative understanding of leadership that was quite different from Machiavelli. Baker held firmly to the concept of group-centered, grassroots leadership rather than leader-centered leadership. Baker was committed to the plight of poor African Americans and she was also committed to a broader struggle, which is a better world for all people. During her lifetime Baker campaigned for several different organizations on many different issues: poverty, unequal education, Vietnam War, South African apartheid, poverty, poor prison conditions, oppression, and sexism (Ransby, 2003). Baker identified with poor Blacks and advanced a political tradition that is democratic, radical, and international. She was a skilled grassroots organizer. She learned her lessons from the streets more than the academy and she sought to understand the world to change it (Ransby, 2003). Baker's worldview, her confidence, and her belief that grassroots people can lead themselves set her apart from Machiavelli and her political contemporaries

Modern theories of management do not agree with Machaivelli's unethical leader/power principles in which power is maintained through fear. The concepts of leadership and power have generated a great deal of discussion over the years because both concepts are closely related and power is one way a leader can influence subordinates. Due to this relationship, it is important to examine the role of power and leadership.

Power and Leadership

Yukl (1989) defines power "as an agent's potential influence over the attitudes and behavior of one or more designated target persons" (p. 14). Northouse (2004) defines power as "the capacity or potential to influence" (p. 6). Hersey, Blanchard, and Johnson (2001) state, "power is influential potential—that is, the resource that enables a leader to gain compliance or commitment from others" (p. 204). Yukl (1989) classifies power into three types—position, personal, and political. Position power is the authority that is delegated down to use rewards and sanctions (Hersey, Blanchard, & Johnson, 2001). This power comes from a person's position in the organization and includes rewards, punishment, rules, making decisions, information, and assigning work. Usually subordinates comply with position power because they obey authority, respect the hierarchical structure, and are loyal to the organization. March and Simon (1958) state that membership in an organization is seen as a social contract where members agree to and must follow the rules for the benefits of membership.

Personal power comes from the interactions of a person with members of the organization. It is the extent to which subordinates are willing to follow a leader and see their own goals as being satisfied by the leader's goals (Hersey, Blanchard, & Johnson, 2001). In an organization, personal power comes from below and flows up in the organization, that is, power comes from subordinates and flows up to the leader. If subordinates are respected and are committed to the leader, the leader will get strong support from subordinates. If the leader makes a few big mistakes, not many subordinates will be willing to follow and support the leader. Therefore personal power can be earned and taken away quite easily. Two skills that are often associated with personal power are

persuasiveness and charisma. The research on leadership traits identified persuasiveness as one of the skills associated with effective leadership (Yukl, 1989a). Persuasion is found to be an important influence technique. Charisma involves the perception by others that a person is extraordinary and can be trusted to lead an organization (Yukl & Falbe, 1991). Although the determinants of charisma are not well understood, leaders use charisma to influence subordinates (Bass, 1985; House 1977).

Political power is a deliberate attempt by a leader to increase or maintain power. It involves control and influence over decision-making processes. As part of the political process alliances are formed with the intention of undermining the position of the opposition to ensure the other group stays in power.

The most widely cited research on power is French and Raven's 1959 work. They conceptualized power from the idea of a dyadic relationship that includes the person who is influencing and the person who is being influenced. French and Raven identified five types of power: reward, legitimate, coercive, referent, and expert. These five power sources can be viewed as components of position and personal power (Wexley & Yukl, 1977). According to French and Raven, each type of power increases a leader's capacity to influence subordinates' behaviors, attitudes, and values. French and Raven stressed that the different types of power are likely to be related in complex ways and each will affect leadership styles.

Ella Baker did not see leadership as having power over others. She did not believe in leaders who wielded power. She saw leadership as being developmental, a process that brought out the innate strength in people to make decisions that affect their lives. Her role as a facilitator and organizer was to release and accentuate the leadership potential that

existed in communities and individuals. Baker's philosophy is that "you must let the oppressed define their own freedom" (King, 1987, p. 282). She believed that leadership must allow people to assert themselves and nurture others in the process of developing new leadership.

Leadership Defined

In comparing various leadership styles across many cultures, scholars have examined the pattern in which leadership emerges and fades. Sometimes leaders emerge by natural succession according to established democratic, societal, and political rules. Political lobbying may be necessary in an electoral system, but in smaller groups such as gangs, skills, and character are the determinants used to secure leadership. In some societies leaders may emerge through the imposition of harsh and unjust brute force. In other societies where there are traditional closed groups such as aristocratic societies, monarchies, and tribes, leaders are selected on the basis of seniority or bloodlines.

Over the past 50 years there have been several different dimensions to define leadership. There are almost as many definitions of leadership as there are persons who have tried to define the concept (Stogdill, 1974). The dimensions into which leadership is defined and their overlapping meanings have added to the confusion (Bass, 1990). Researchers have defined leadership according to the aspect of the phenomenon that is most important to them. Bass (1990) states:

> Leadership has been conceived as the focus of group processes, as a matter of personality, as a matter of inducing compliance, as the exercise of influence, as particular behaviors, as a form of persuasion, as a power relation, as an instrument to achieve goals, as an effect of interaction, as a differentiated role, as initiation of structure, and as many combinations of these definitions (p. 11).

Yukl (2002) notes that leadership has been defined in terms of traits, behaviors, influence, interaction patterns, role relationships, and position in occupation. Northouse (2004) presents four components of leadership. "(a) Leadership is a process, (b) leadership involves influence, (c) leadership occurs within a group context, and (d) leadership involves goal attainment" (p. 3). Based on these components, Northouse defines leadership as "a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal" (p. 3). Hersey, Blanchard, and Johnson's (2001) definition of leadership is "whenever one person attempts to influence the behavior of an individual or group, regardless of the reason. It may be for one's own goals or for the goals of others, and these goals may or may not be congruent with organizational goals" (p. 9). Gabert (2003) suggests that a leader should be someone with a vision to lead. The vision comes from a representative team and your team represents your organization. Gabert (2003) defines leadership as a "process of actively influencing the activities of an individual or group in efforts toward goal achievement. Through this process, leaders and followers raise one another to the higher levels of mortality and motivation." These definitions suggest that for leadership to take place there must be leaders and followers.

A Brief History of the Evolution of Leadership Theory

Leadership theory began in the early 1900s with Frederick Winslow Taylor who used his scientific management theory of time and motion to increase worker's productivity. In the book, *Management of Organizational Behavior: Leading Human Resources,* 2001, Hersey, Blanchard, and Johnson state: " The function of the leader under scientific management or classical theory was to set up and enforce performance

criteria to meet organizational goals. The main focus of a leader was on the needs of the organization and not on the needs of the individual" (p. 88). The concern here is on tasks (outputs).

In the early 1930s, Elton Mayo and the human relations movement replaced Taylor's scientific management movement. Human relations theorists argued that management should not look only at technological methods to improve productivity; they should investigate human affairs—the interpersonal relations that develop in the organization. Under human relations the function of the leader is to "facilitate cooperative goal attainment among followers while providing opportunities for their personal growth and development" (Hersey, Blanchard, & Johnson 2001, p. 89). The focus here is on people (inputs).

Before 1945, the most common approach to the study of leadership was on leadership traits. The trait theory was one of the earliest attempts to study and determine what made some men great leaders. Stogdill presented the best overview of trait theory (Northouse, 2004). In his first survey, Stogdill showed that leaders' traits do not necessarily make them leaders. Stodgill stated that the traits that leaders possess must be relevant to the situation in which they are working because people who possess traits that make them leaders in one situation may not be leaders in another situation (Northouse, 2004; Stogdill, 1974). Stogdill carried out a second survey, which was published in 1974. He compared his findings from the second survey with the findings from the first survey. The results from the second survey placed emphasis on personality and situational factors as determinants of leadership. (Bass & Stogdill, 1990; Northouse, 2004). Gary Yukl (1994) states that Stogdill makes it clear that recognition of leadership traits is not a

return to the original trait approach, however, possession of some traits may increase leader effectiveness, but it does not guarantee effectiveness, and the importance of different traits is dependent on the situation in which the leader is functioning.

In 1955, Robert Katz published the article *Skills of an Effective Administrator*. In this article Katz addresses leadership as a set of developing skills (Northouse, 2004). Katz claims that skills are different from traits because skills are what leaders can accomplish whereas traits are who leaders are (Northouse, 2004). Katz suggests that effective leadership is based on three personal skills: technical, human, and conceptual. Technical skills involve having the knowledge, ability, technique, and proficiency to do a particular work. Human skills are having the knowledge about how to work with people. Conceptual skills involve having the ability to work with ideas and concepts (Hersey, Blanchard, & Johnson, 2001). It was not until the 1990s that the skills theory received recognition as having potential for leadership.

In the early 1970s, the Path-Goal theory was another approach to the study of leadership. Path-Goal theory builds upon two concepts: (1) the Ohio State Leadership Studies and (2) the Expectancy Model of Motivation. The key areas of the Ohio State Leadership model are initiating structure and consideration. The model suggests that the most effective leaders would be high on both the initiating structure and the considerations dimension (Hersey, Blanchard, & Johnson, 2001). The Expectancy Model of Motivation focuses on the effort-performance and the performance-goal reward linkages. Robert House (House 1971; House & Mitchell, 1974) is well known for his investigations on Path-Goal theory. House, who did much of his early leadership research at the Ohio State University, was interested in finding out and explaining which style of

leadership was effective and why. House was also interested in those situations in which initiating structure was most appropriate and those situations where consideration was most appropriate (Northouse, 2004). The main concern of the Path-Goal theory is to show how leaders influence followers' perceptions of their work goals, personal goals, and paths to goal attainment. The belief is that leaders' behaviors are motivating or satisfying if the behaviors increase followers' goal attainment and clarify the paths to the goals (Hersey, Blanchard, & Johnson, 2001). Path-Goal theory suggests that a directive style of leadership is preferable for situations in which subordinates are dogmatic, demands are ambiguous, and organizational procedures and rules are not clear. In these situations, directive leadership can provide guidance and psychological structure for subordinates (Northouse, 2004). A supportive style of leadership nurtures subordinates who lack self-confidence and have structured, unsatisfying, repetitive, unchallenging, or frustrating work style (Northouse, 2004). Participative leadership is preferred when the work is ambiguous because participation gives clarity to how certain paths lead to certain goals (Northouse, 2004). Achievement-oriented leadership is effective where subordinates are expected to perform ambiguous task that are not challenging. In this situation, leaders set high standards for subordinates and raise subordinates confidence that they have the ability to reach their goals (Northouse, 2004).

In the late 1960s, Paul Hersey and Kenneth Blanchard developed situational leadership theory. Until 1982, Hersey and Blanchard worked together to refine this theory. As the name implies, situational leadership focuses on leadership in situations. According to situational leadership theory, there is no one best way for a leader to influence subordinates. The leadership style that the leader uses with subordinates

depends on the readiness of the people and the situation. The basic premise of the theory is that different situations demand different kinds of leadership (Hersey, Blanchard, & Johnson, 2001). Northouse (2004) states that situational leadership is based on the idea that employees move forward and backward along a developmental continuum, that is, a continuum that represents the competence and commitment of subordinates. For a leader to be effective, the leader must know where subordinates are situated along the continuum and adapt his or her leadership styles to match the developmental needs of subordinates. Because subordinates move back and forth along a continuum, leaders must always be flexible in their leadership styles and learn to influence each subordinate differently based on the subordinate's work situation (Yukl, 1998).

Over the years a debate has been formulated about how leaders influence followers. In 1978, James MacGregor Burns distinguished between two types of leadership: transformational leadership and transactional leadership (Yukl, 2002). The major distinction between these two styles of leadership is how followers are influenced and the effect the leader has on followers.

Downton (1973) introduced the term transformational leadership. In the late 1970s and early 1980s transformational leadership became the focus of much research. Transformational leadership refers broadly to a process in which leaders and followers raise one another to higher levels of morality (Gabert, 2003). The transformational leader creates an awareness of the importance of the task, asks followers to look beyond personal needs to the needs of the organization, and cultivates what Maslow (cited by Michaelsen, 2003) referred to as self-actualization. In this sense the transformational leader shapes values, sets the benchmark of self-sacrifice for the organization and the

followers (Bennis & Nanus, 1997; Gardner, 1995). The transformational leader is concerned with change in the organization (Coleman, Boyatizis, & Mckee, 2002) and what Gardner (1990) refers to as a continual renewal process. Transformational leadership involves influence that moves subordinates to accomplish much more than what is expected of them (Northouse, 2004).

On the other hand, transactional leadership refers to a process in which leaders exchange rewards and punishment as a consequence to followers' behavior in order to attain the goals of the organization (Kuhnert, 1994; Yukl, 2002). Transactional leaders do not individualize the needs or focus on the personal development of subordinates (Northouse, 2004). Transactional leaders are seen as being more concerned with the minute-by-minute issues of the organization (Peters and Waterman, 1982). Peters and Waterman refer to transactional leadership as boring, encouraging, and tough when necessary, and the occasional use of raw power. Burns (1978) referred to this style of leadership as the necessary activities of leaders that take up most of the day.

In 1976, House published a theory of charismatic leadership. The concept of charisma is used to describe special gifts that certain individuals possess that allow them to do extraordinary things. Charisma as defined by Weber (1947) is " a special personality characteristic that gives a person superhuman or exceptional powers and is reserved for a few, is of divine origin, and results in the person being treated as a leader" (Northouse, 2004, p. 171). House suggests that the personal characteristics of a charismatic leader are having a strong desire to influence others, and a strong sense of one's own moral values, self-confidence and dominance. Since House published his

charismatic theory, other researchers have extended and revised the theory. Sharmir, House, and Kanungo, (1998) state that charismatic leadership transforms followers' self–concept and tries to link the identity of followers with the collective identity of the organization. This is accomplished by emphasizing the intrinsic rewards of work and not the extrinsic rewards so that followers will see work as an extension of themselves (Northouse, 2004).

Black leadership although oriented towards raising awareness and working on projects to change the status of Blacks in America, would appear to conform to transformational leadership, offered by James MacGregor Burns and charismatic leadership, offered by Robert House. However, the experiences of African Americans do not fit neatly into the theoretical framework of mainstream leadership theory written for Caucasian males. The uniqueness and special situations of the African American experience is also true of the leader-follower relationship in Black communities.

Black Male Leadership

Black activists in America have continuously struggled for improved conditions for all Black people. Millions of Black people's lives were subjugated and hidden behind the cotton walls of the South. Leaders like Booker T. Washington and W.E.B. Du Bois struggled to develop strategies that would help Black people survive in an oppressive society. From the early 20th century to World War II, Black leadership was almost dominated entirely by Washington and Du Bois. They dominated Negro intellect and almost exclusively defined the political, economic, and social agenda of an entire race. The leadership styles of Booker T. Washington and W. E. B. Du Bois grew out of

situations that existed at the time. It would appear that these Black leaders would fit neatly into transformation and situational leadership models. Washington and Du Bois each took a different path in moving towards leadership for an oppressed community within a racialized social formation. Since the 1960's historians have focused on Washington and DuBois' leadership, personal differences, and conflicting styles in order to define Black leadership.

Booker T. Washington

Booker T. Washington is often referred to as accommodationist leader. This type of leader has a reformist approach to American culture and the political and economic systems within it. Accommodationist leaders believed that people's duty is to make the basic democratic and capitalist systems work by avoiding protest and confrontation. Accommodationist leaders look within the system seeking ways to expand opportunities.

Washington puts forward his integrationist approach of accommodation to segregation, which is the idea of Black economic development through Black state supported and private institutions. Marable (1998) lists four components of Washington's accommodation to segregation. The first component of Washington's strategy of accommodation to segregation made the Tuskegee Institute responsible for the social and cultural transformation of the Black Southern labor force. Tuskegee created programs where farmers learned the importance of agricultural diversification, soil conservation, and crop rotation. Tuskegee also functioned as a bank for Black farmers who were encouraged to purchase their own lands.

The second component of Washington's integrationist conservative strategy was that Tuskegee Institute became a model school for all Black schools in the South.

Students were taught to respect authority. Male students were taught carpentry, printing, agricultural economics, and other technical training, while female students learned the skills of laundry, sewing, and kitchen duties. Religion was a major part of the curriculum.

The third component was the development of a Black middle class and a highly organized Black entrepreneurial class. In 1900, Washington started the National Negro Business League to promote Black private enterprise and cooperative activities among Black businessmen. This close cooperation between Black educational institutions and the Black private sector provided Black entrepreneurs with business and managerial skills and access to a modest capital and created a Black elite.

The fourth component of Washington's strategy was the creation of White financial support for Negro education. During Reconstruction, several Northern White agencies made small subsidies available to Black trade schools and colleges. For example, the Peabody Education fund donated $1000 to Tuskegee Institute in 1883. Washington's strategy of educational political economy was successful because it resulted in the development of Black owned businesses and firms, small banks, and a dependence on conservative funding.

Washington believed that the economic system was the foundation of society and that control of Black economic power would lead to Black political strength. Washington wanted Black people to become aware of the importance of developing a powerful economic system by looking beyond their present position. What Washington had in mind was an image of the revolutionary power of capitalism to overturn precapitalist backwardness (Childs, 1989). The problem for Washington was how to get Black people

to overcome the barriers that prevent them from taking up their historic role and gaining their freedom.

Marable (1998) argues that Washington's philosophy of "racial accommodation" was to pledge the fidelity of his race to White America by declaring that Black Americans are "the most patient, law abiding, and unresentful people that the world has seen" (p. 31). On the sensitive issues of racial integration and the protection of Blacks' political rights, Washington made a dramatic concession that Blacks would not push desegregation and political franchise. Instead if permission were given, Blacks would develop their own economic, educational, and social institutions within an expanding Southern capitalism (Marable, 1998). Washington's concession made him America's most highly honored and popular Black leader and because of his patronage both Black and White supporters were able to secure Federal Government posts and Negro colleges that he was affiliated with received funds (Marable, 1998). Booker T. Washington did not encourage Blacks to get a college or university degree. He advocated industrial, manual training, and accommodation in matters of civil rights as a way of ending discrimination. Washington's view contrasted with Baker who advocated for the education of Blacks and radical protest action as a way to fight discrimination.

African-American intellectuals questioned Washington's economic strategy on rural development at the expense of petty bourgeoisie. The most articulate representative of the anti-Washington economic strategy was W.E.B. Du Bois who in 1910 founded the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). Du Bois maintains that Washington's efforts to suppress free speech and civil rights revealed his determination to be a collaborator with White corporations, the White state, and White

segregationists in controlling the status of the Negro. Du Bois' criticizes Washington as "an intercessor between his group and the dominant class" (Marable, 1998, p. 35). Washington got his power from the White ruling class and he was given publicity as a great leader because "he demanded less for the Negro people than that which the ruling class had already conceded" (Marable, 1998, p. 35).

W.E.B. Du Bois

William Edward Burghardt Du Bois was one of the most prominent influential Black leaders in America. He was an articulate and distinguished scholar who studied and analyzed the African and African American experience and challenged the accommodationist leadership of Booker T. Washington. Marable (1998) claims that Du Bois challenged African Americans to defend themselves and struggle for civil rights in America. In an era marked with political disfranchisement, lynching, racial and social segregation, Du Bois called on all Blacks to fight for freedom. In 1905, Du Bois started the Niagara Movement with Black lawyers, educators, and intellectuals who criticized segregation laws and agitated for civil rights. The Niagara Movement merged with White liberals and socialists to form the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP).

African American intellectuals saw themselves as American citizens who are Black. They opposed institutional separation based on racial categories and demanded civil and political rights within a capitalist democracy. Du Bois asserted that the function of education was to train individuals for social leadership, however, Blacks would continue to be led by Whites until an African American intellectual was allowed to emerge (Gordon, 2000). Du Bois stated that this emergence would never occur by

straitjacketing Blacks with vocational education (Gordon, 2000). Du Bois felt that a Black culture was necessary for African Americans to survive. He attempted to construct a synthesis of this culture based on his cultural understanding of a Black identity. Du Bois' cultural formation was the "double consciousness" theory (Marable, 1998, p. 43). He stated that the consciousness of African Americans was found within the dual reality of their Blackness and their American identity. Du Bois claimed that the Black American was both " an American, a Negro, two souls, two thoughts, two unreconciled strivings; two warring ideals in one dark body, whose dogged strength alone keeps it from being torn asunder" (Marable, 1998, p. 43). This double consciousness theory was important in explaining Du Bois' political and academic career. Du Bois was a leader in the struggle against all forms of sexism, anti-Semitism, and racial oppression. He called for democratic rights for all Americans, and he identified with the struggles of all Black people in Third World countries. Du Bois participated in the struggle to achieve independence for all non-White countries. This "double consciousness" established the matrix for the foundation of Du Bois' cultural forms of resistance and self-realization.

Du Bois felt that Black people were a vital source of energy, but they lacked the necessary direction for progress. Du Bois stated that literature, art, and philosophical culture would energize the people instead of the materialism that characterized Washington's approach and points to the advancement of capitalism in the South (Childs, 1989). Du Bois attacked Washington's position that oppression came from the irrationality of racism and that capitalism was its saving grace (Childs, 1989). Du Bois argued that capitalism is the problem and that racism is one of the instruments of

capitalist worldwide. Du Bois saw racism as a political functional mode of thought that entered all areas of Black people's lives (Childs, 1989).

In his book *Darkwater: Voices from Within the Veil*, Du Bois stated that "Whiteness as a cultural identity was based upon a historical and hypocritical fraud" (Marable, 1998, p. 45). He continued along this same theme by saying that "the discovery of personal whiteness among the world's peoples is a very modern thing, --a nineteenth and twentieth century matter, indeed" (p. 45). Du Bois wrote that racial privilege and White superiority could be found in the dynamics of capitalism, colonialism, and domination:

> This theory of human culture and its aims has worked itself through warp and woof of our daily thought with a thoroughness that few realize. Everything great, good, efficient, fair, and honorable is "white"; and everything mean, bad, blundering, cheating, and dishonorable is "yellow"; a bad taste is "brown"; and the devil is "black." The changes of this theme are continually rung in picture and story, in newspaper heading and moving-picture, in sermon and school book, until, of course, the King Man has no rights which a white man is bound to respect. There must come the necessary despising and hatreds of these savage half-men, this unclean *canaille* of the world—these dogs of men. All through the world this gospel is preaching. It has its literature, it has its priests, it has its secret propaganda and above all—it pays!" (p. 45).

Marable notes that Du Bois found that White America's newspapers, television and radio stations, theaters, films, professional athletes, and other communication systems encouraged racial stereotypes of White superiority and Black inferiority. Du Bois believed that it is only when African Americans can turn blind eyes to racial inferiority that culture can be used as a creative construct. Du Bois challenged those who said that former slaves had no right to speak about art or aesthetics. Du Bois stated: "We want to be Americans, full-fledged Americans, with all the rights of other American citizens" (p. 46). Du Bois saw the struggle against racism and oppression as an attempt to undermine

racist stereotypes and beliefs among Whites and restore a sense of identity and pride among Black people.

Ella Baker respected Du Bois, yet she was not comfortable with his leadership style. She described Du Bois as aloof and of having a great sense of ego and self-importance. He was not the kind of organizer that she would have modeled herself after (Ransby, 2003). Baker did not go into the NAACP because of people like Du Bois. She went because of the people in the local branches who earned her loyalty, respect, and perseverance (Ransby, 2003).

Although Washington and Du Bois influenced Black leadership to a great extent, without any doubt, one name that is clearly synonymous with Black leadership is Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Dr. King was a leader in the civil rights movement during the mid twentieth century. An apostle of non-violence and a dedicated humanitarian, Dr. King attracted broader support from both Black and White Americans than Booker T. Washington and W.E.B. Du Bois. His violent and premature death in Memphis, Tennessee on April 4, 1968 was a tragedy in the history of the United States.

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. began his public career as a reluctant leader who was elected president of the Montgomery Improvement Association (MIA) on December 5, 1955. The MIA was formed to pursue the citywide boycott sparked by Rosa Parks' arrest on the Montgomery bus (Garrow, 1987). Due to harassment and death threats during the long Montgomery bus boycott, King wanted to give up the leadership of the MIA. However, on the night of January 27, 1956, King received a phone call that warned him if he did not leave Montgomery immediately he would die. Unable to sleep, King thought

about the challenges that he faced, his family, and a way to give up the leadership of the MIA without appearing to be a coward. That night as King prayed he heard an inner voice that told him to do what he thought was right. This was a major religious experience for King (Branch, 1988). "For King, the moment awakened and confirmed his belief that the essence of religion was not a grand metaphysical idea but something personal, grounded in experience—something that opened up mysteriously beyond the predicaments of human beings in their frailest and noblest moments" (Branch, 1988, p. 162). The experience gave King a spiritual resource that he was able to draw from during the Montgomery bus boycott. While King had no active desire for leadership, he felt that the choice of whether or not to accept the burdens of leadership was not his alone to make. King began to appreciate his leadership role as a rare opportunity for service that he could not give up. (Garrow, 1987).

In 1959 King moved from Montgomery to Atlanta to share his father's pulpit at the Ebenezer Baptist Church and to devote more time to the civil rights movement. He made a vow to get involved in the movement on a larger scale. King stated, "I can't stop now. History has thrust something upon me from which I cannot turn away (Garrow, 2001, p. 4). News coverage often portrayed King as the main figure in the Southern Civil Rights Movement, but King felt that he took up the burdens of public leadership because that is what God wanted him to do (Garrow, 2001). King's decision to move forward and devote his life to the Black movement was a personal sacrifice he had been called upon to make. "As his symbolic role grew, as more and more praise rained down upon him, and as the opponents of justice increasingly targeted him, Martin took it all—as a powerful, persistent reminder that selflessness was the highest goal to aspire to" (Garrow, 2001, p.

10). Any commendations that King received increased the burden of his personal cross and led him to commit himself intensely to a mission that would one day end in his martyrdom.

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. was a charismatic leader in a mass struggle for freedom for Blacks. King was a Black leader that emerged as Black communities mobilized for struggles against racism and oppression. In the media King is depicted as the initiator and the only great leader of the civil rights movement in the 1950s and 1960s. The media has focused on King's exceptional qualities as a leader and did not give kudos to those people and factors that made it possible for King to rise to prominence as a great leader. King is seen as a charismatic leader who single-handedly led and directed the civil rights movement in the South. Carson (1987) states, " the term charisma has traditionally been used to describe the godlike, magical qualities possessed by certain leaders" (p. 449). Carson stresses that the meaning of the term charisma has changed over the years. Today, "charisma refers to many different leadership styles that involve the capacity to inspire—usually through oratory—emotional bonds between leaders and followers" (Carson, 1987, p. 449). Although King's oratory was exceptional, he did not want the accolades and unquestioned support that were often given to charismatic leaders. King was a provocative and emotional speaker and only those who were not familiar with the Afro-American clergy would assume that his oratorical skills were unique (Carson, 1987). Although King was aware of his charisma and he used it as a tool to galvanized Blacks at mass meetings, he knew that charisma alone was not sufficient for leadership in the civil rights movement. King's success as a leader was also based on his "intellectual and moral cogency and his skill as a conciliator among movement

activists who refused to be simply King's "followers" or "lieutenants" (Carson, 1987, p. 452).

Martin Luther King, Jr., understood the Black world from his privileged position of having grown up in a stable family within a major Black urban community. King also learned how to speak persuasively to the surrounding White world (Carson, 1987). King was able to articulate Black concerns to White audiences, and he was also able to mobilized Blacks through his day-to-day involvement in Black community institutions and through his access to the regional institutional network of the Black church (Carson, 1987). His advocacy of non-violent activism gave the Black movement invaluable positive press coverage, but his effectiveness as a protest leader derived mainly from his ability to mobilize Black community resources. Baker saw nonviolence as a tactical choice, and she questioned the capacity of nonviolence to serve as a philosophical basis on which to build a movement. She even questioned how far nonviolent mass action could go as a strategy for mobilization (Ransby, 2003). Baker saw limitations in nonviolence because of her connections with militant struggles of the 1930s and the self-defense tactics of people that she worked with in the 1940s (Ransby, 2003).

Summary

Chapter three presents a discussion on leadership theory and Black male leadership. The three Blacks leaders that are discussed in this chapter are presented in the context of southern race relations and politics at the beginning of the 20th century. The information is presented in a historical context that showed how Washington, Du Bois, and King each used a different strategy to achieve the same goal—freeing Blacks from

oppression and giving them first class citizenship. Each leader took a different path towards the attainment of this goal and in doing so; they did not find a clear solution to the race problem in America. Black leadership is a unique type of leadership because the special situations of the African American experience do not fit neatly into mainstream leadership theories.

CHAPTER FOUR – ORGANIZATIONAL THEORY

Introduction

Before 1950, organizational practice separated the work of workers from the work of managers. This isolation did not show that people in an organization might be working on the same organizational design (Pigors, Myers, & Malm, 1969). Organizational practice was focused on the division of labor and assignment of responsibility as the primary organizational task. The assumptions here are that (a) workers have the same boss, (b) the number of people that a manager has under his command was limited to a small group, (c) relationship in the group is characterized by command and control, and (d) as the organization grows bigger and higher in an upward manner, there are different levels of supervisory control (Pigors, Myers, & Malm, 1969). Organizational practice encouraged functionalization. An organization before 1950 was divided into different organizational branches. Within each branch was a group of people with common technical competence. Examples of branches were manufacturing, marketing, and accounting (Pigors, Myers, & Malm, 1969). As business grew and organizations diversified, some organizations were unable to support new organizational structures because they were resistant to change. Managers faced rigid and immobile organizational structures at a time when they had to relate the organization to technological and cultural changes, and a growing economy, (Pigors, Myers, & Malm, 1969).

During 1950 to 1960 there were rapid changes in organizational size, complexity, and technology. Due to these changes, research and development were carried out and researchers studied group dynamics and human relations to reinforce the experiments going on in organizations. Business emerged “as an institution, the primary economic

organ of our society, whose own inner logic could now generate criteria for the large-scale organizational design-criteria which the prior "functional" approach had been unable to provide" (Pigors, Myers, & Malm, 1969).

Greenberg & Baron (2003) defined organizations as structured social systems that are made up of groups, teams, and individuals working together to meet goals. Hersey, Blanchard, & Johnson's (2001) definition of organizations are social systems comprised of many interrelated subsystems. These subsystems are administrative/structural subsystem, informational/decision-making subsystem, human/social subsystem, and an economic/technological subsystem. The administrative/structural subsystem focuses on authority, responsibility, and structure. The informational/decision-making subsystem places emphasis on information and decisions that keep the organization functioning. The human/social subsystem focuses on the motivation and needs of the organization's members, and the leadership that the organization provides. The economic/technological subsystem is concerned primarily with the work that needs to be done in the organization and the cost of the work (Hersey, Blanchard, & Johnson, 2001).

Twentieth century organizations have become powerful industrialized societies. They are dynamic and ever-changing entities with open systems that use energy to transform resources (raw materials) from the environment into output (finished products). These organizations represent different organizational models.

Different Models of Organization

Three theories of organizations have a great deal of influence on management thought practice. These three theories to a great extent have influenced organizational

models. The theories are classical theory, the neo-classical theory, and modern theory (Scott, 1961). Even though the theories are distinct, they are not unrelated.

Classical Theory

Classical theory deals with the anatomy of formal organizations and is built around four major elements: division of labor, scalar and functional processes, structure, and span of control. From the division of labor, the other elements flow (Scott, 1961). The scalar and functional processes are the chain of command, unity of the command, delegation of authority and responsibility, and administrative reports (Scott, 1961). Structure is the system and pattern in the organization. Classical organizations usually have two structures, the line and the staff. Structure is the means of introducing logical and consistent relationships among the varied functions that the organization is made up of (Scott, 1961). The span of control is important in the shape of the organization. A short span results in a tall structure and a wide span refers to a flat structure. The span of control directs attention to the complex human relations in an organization (Scott, 1961). Scott (1961) points out that in formal organizations, classical theory does not support the interplay of individual personality, informal groups, intraorganizational conflict, and decision-making processes.

Within the classical organizations there are the bureaucratic management, administrative management, and the scientific management. Max Weber, a German sociologist and classical organization theorist constructed a rational-legal authority model of an ideal type of structure known as bureaucracy. Weber's (1952) categories of rational legal authority are:

(1) a continuous organization of official functions bound by rules.

(2) a specified sphere of competence that involves (a) obligations to perform functions that have been marked off as part of a systematic division of labor, (b) the provision of a person with the authority to carry out these functions, and (c) an administrative body that will exercise complete authority.

(3) a principle of hierarchy with each lower office under the supervision of a higher office.

(4) a highly qualified administrative staff member with specialized training to oversee the regulation of technical rules and norms in the organization.

(5) a separation of property belonging to the organization and the personal property of officials who work for the organization because the organization's property is provided for use on the job and must be accounted for.

(6) administrative acts, decisions, and rules are recorded in writing.

(7) legal authority that is exercised in a wide variety of forms and is necessary for running a bureaucratic organization.

Weber characterizes bureaucracy as possessing hierarchically arranged, continuously operating offices, with the behavior of occupants channeled and circumscribed by general rules (Gouldner, 1950). Bureaucracy is a form of organization in which rules are applied to keep higher ranking officials in charge of lower ranking workers, who fulfill the duties assigned to them (Greenberg & Baron, 2003). Bureaucratic organizations differentiate between those who give the orders [managers] and those who carry out the orders [workers] (Greenberg & Baron, 2003).

Max Weber's theory of organizational leadership does not capture the expressions of women's leadership that was encountered during the civil rights movement. Weber's theory of leadership highlights traditional leadership that rests on the authority of the leader. Ella Baker encountered problems with traditional, bureaucratic leadership when she worked in organizations like the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC). NAACP and SCLC each had a centralized leadership that made decisions for the organizations. When Baker went to work for the NAACP, she was already an experienced organizer and grassroots activist. She spent a great deal of time working with local branches. Baker found that most branches did not have autonomy; they were very dependent on the National Office. "In an area where Blacks suffered every racial indignity—one nearby school had 26 classrooms for 1,876 students—local leadership saw no role for the branch in speaking to day-to-day injustices" (Payne, 1995, p. 87). Baker felt that the NAACP was a successful Black organization, but it was blinded by its success. The NAACP management team had a centralized leader who was directed by lawyers and professionals, leaving most of its members without any meaningful roles to play in the organization. Baker felt that the NAACP did not capitalized on the masses or dealt with the kinds of issues that plagued the local branches (Payne, 1995).

Baker encountered similar problems in SCLC. The idea that was central to Baker was that grassroots people be allowed to develop into leaders and make decisions for themselves. SCLC leadership did not allow male or female grassroots activists to develop leadership skills. Baker did not think very highly of the leadership skills of Martin Luther King, Jr. She said that King came out of a highly competitive, Black, middle class

background and out of that background, he became the chairman of a very important movement that symbolized prestige which King could not refuse (Baker, 1968). In order to refuse the position of chairman/leader of SCLC, Baker felt that King would have to develop a system of values that were independent from middle class values (Baker, 1968). Baker said that people who were not prepared to be leaders in the true sense of developing leadership within organizations should not accept leadership roles (Baker, 1968).

Henri Fayol, a French industrialist, is another influential classical organization theorist. Fayol believed that effective organizations are those that have formal hierarchy (Greenberg & Baron, 2003). Fayol belongs to the administrative management branch and pioneered ideas on how organizations should be structured. Fayol's ideal organizations would have (a) division of labor, (b) authority and responsibility, (c) discipline and sanctions for violations, (d) unity of command with one clear authority figure, (e) subordination of individuals' interests to the organization's interest, (f) remuneration of personnel with fair salaries to the satisfaction of both the employee and employer, (g) centralization which would result in utilization of personnel (h) scalar chain which will increase the effectiveness of organizational communication, (i) equity and equality shown when dealing with employees (j) tenure to employees to maximize productivity, and (k) initiative and teamwork at all levels of the organizations.

Baker would not agree with Fayol that an effective organization is one with a formal hierarchy. However, she would support Fayol on the following issues: fair salaries for all employees, teamwork at all levels of the organizations, and the encouragement of every member of the organization to contribute in the decision-making process. Baker

was anti-bureaucratic and anti-hierarchical, willing to work with anyone in the organization for the good of all the members (Baker, 1968).

Classical theory can also be traced to the works of Frederick Winslow Taylor who is known as the "father of scientific management." Taylor (1916) states, "The principal object of management should be to secure the maximum prosperity for the employer coupled with the maximum prosperity for each employee" (p. 9). For Taylor, the words "maximum prosperity" means large dividends for the company and owner, the development of every sector in the business so that prosperity would be permanent, high wages for employees, the development of each employee so that the employee can become efficient in his field and produce more. Scientific management has for its firm conviction that the maximum prosperity of employer and the maximum prosperity of the employee are one and the same; that prosperity of the employer cannot exist without the prosperity of the employee (Taylor, 1961). Taylor's experiments involved determining the best way of performing work operation, the time that is required to perform the work, materials needed, and the work sequence. He tried to establish a division of labor between management and employees.

Scientific management also consists of supervising employees, improving work methods, and providing incentives to employees through the piece rate system Although Taylor's principles of scientific management were very popular and he was the first to stress that management's main responsibility was to make an organization productive, Taylor's insistence on the very close supervision of lower ranking employees is counterproductive as proven by contemporary organizational research.

Ella Baker and SNCC operated under "participatory democracy" (Crawford, 1993, p. 51). According to Baker, participatory democracy included the empowerment of grassroots people at all levels of the organization, group centered leadership, and direct action (Crawford, 1993). Baker's philosophy was that organizations should empower leaders to take on the role of facilitators to bring out the potential in organizational members. Baker's main goal was the empowerment of all people. Members of an organization should be encouraged to participate in organizational activities, vote, and be part of the decision-making process. Moving away from bureaucracy would encourage participation of all members and could prove highly beneficial to the organization.

Neoclassical Theory

The assumption that pervades conventional organizational theory is that authority is the means of managerial control and the terms *up* and *down* in an organization refer to the scale of authority. Principles like unity of command, staff and line, and span of control are derived from the scale of authority in the organization (McGregor, 1960). Douglas McGregor, Rensis Likert, and Chris Argyris attempted to improve upon the classical theory with more of a human relations approach called neoclassical theory.

Douglas McGregor was an organizational theorist who objected to the rigid hierarchy imposed by Weber's bureaucratic model because it was based on managerial assumptions about human nature and behavior. These negative assumptions were people dislike work; they will try to avoid work; they will have to be coerced, forced, controlled, directed, threatened, and punished to work; and they do not have ambition (McGregor, 1960). McGregor refers to these negative assumptions about human behavior as Theory

X. Theory X does not allow the possibility for human growth. Ella Baker would not support a theory that implements procedures that are derived from inadequate and incorrect assumptions about people. McGregor argued that people have a natural desire to work, they are committed, they will exercise self-direction and self-control, they will learn, they are creative and imaginative, they will seek and accept responsibility under favorable conditions, and they will be innovative in solving organizational problems. McGregor refers to these assumptions as Theory Y (McGregor, 1960). Ella Baker would agree with McGregor on his Theory Y assumptions. Baker strongly believed that people have the right to work through their own situations and make decisions for themselves.

Rensis Likert conducted studies on the differences between good and bad supervisors based on high and low productivity. Likert proposed four levels of organizations: Systems 1, Systems 2, Systems 3, and Systems 4. Systems 1 organization has an authoritarian supervisory organization system based on fear and punishment. In a systems 2 organization, only managers are allowed to make decisions. However, rewards are used to motivate employees who have some freedom to comment on organizational decisions. Systems 3 organization encourages employees to open consultation on decisions made by managers. Systems 4 organization is a democratic model and employees are encouraged to participate in making organizational decisions. (Greenberg & Baron, 2003). Baker would support Systems 4 organization only if it includes grassroots people at all level of the organization.

Chris Argyris argued that managerial domination in organizations blocks employees from expressing themselves and successfully accomplishing tasks. Baker believed that most leaders placed too much emphasis on themselves and take away the

confidence and abilities of the people that they are leading (Baker, 1968). This leads to dissatisfaction, high employee turnover, and very poor performance (Greenberg & Baron, 2003).

Although Douglass McGregor, Rensis Likert, and Chris Argyris argued for organizations that are less bureaucratic and more humanistic, they do not call for the participation of grassroots people at all levels of the organization and a decentralized leadership. The emphasis on participation has three functions: (a) a call for the grassroots involvement of all people to participate in decisions that will affect their lives, (b) a call for direct action as an answer to fear and alienation, and (c) the minimization of hierarchy and emphasis of expertise as a basis for leadership (Mueller, 1993). Baker strongly supported the call for direct action to create meaningful changes in society. She encouraged people to challenge injustice and oppression and in doing so they can begin the process of transforming their communities and their lives.

Modern Theory

Informal organizations make demands on individuals in terms of expected behaviors and the satisfaction the individual hopes to get from associating with people on the job. Both sets of expectancies interact and may result in the individual changing his or her behavior to synchronize with the demands of the group. The group may also modify its expectation about an individual because of the impact of the individual's personality on group norms (Scott, 1961). Modern organizations have a physical setting in which the job is performed. In the physical setting where work is carried out on complex machine systems, individuals interact and problems are encountered. Problems created by

interpersonal relationships cannot be dealt with in a purely technical way. Work cannot be done effectively unless problems are solved and the psychological, social, and physiological characteristics of people participating in the work environment are considered (Scott, 1961).

Modern organizational model is a major departure from classical and neoclassical organizational models. This model views organizational members as untapped resources, encourages leaders to share information with subordinates, and gives subordinates opportunities to participate in decision making policies that allow them broad latitude to shape and modify their own jobs and exercise control over their behaviors (Pigors, Myers, & Malm, 1969).

Baker was an activist-organizer who believed in the abilities and knowledge of local people to lead and address their own issues. Baker believed that people are capable of organizing and making changes in their lives. She believed that people learn from their mistakes and successes, and in doing so, they grow and begin to believe in themselves and their own power to affect the world and make changes for the benefit of all people. Baker believed organizations should serve as systems of support and offer assistance and resources to local organizations and local people. She believed that organizations needed to serve the grassroots that made organizations strong.

Organizational theories do not apply to Ella Baker because she had a different organizational style from that of established organizations. She did not support the top-down approach of large bureaucratic organizations. She had an organizational style that actively worked to keep people empowered and informed. Her goal was to empower people to be strong and organize themselves to challenge injustices in society because

people do not need strong leaders to tell them what to do. Baker believed that organizations' roles should be to support people and provide mutual aid and solidarity. Whether people develop a sense of their own strength depends to a great extent on the organizational context in which they are working (Payne, 1989). Baker did not believe that the bigger the organization, the better the organization is. She did not believe in the assumption that an organization that is rapidly growing is a good sign of the organization's vitality (Payne, 1989). Baker criticized the NAACP's style of work. The organization was too bureaucratic and stressed membership size without trying to involve the members directly in running the organization (Baker, 1968). In 1944 the NAACP had 400,000 members, however, the members did not play a meaningful role in the development of the organization's policies and strategies (Payne, 1989). Rapid growth of a large organization usually leads to political factions and deterioration in the quality of relationships in the organizations. Baker felt that large organizations are more bureaucratic and are not likely to offer the type of nurturing of individual growth that smaller organizations offer to low-income members. Baker felt that large organizations lack the dedication that is necessary to generate a strong sense of community in local communities (Payne, 1989).

Organizational theories have different assumptions about organizational and human nature in general. Organizational theories reflect the values and norms of Western society and omit different conceptualizations of human beings and society found in other cultures. The different models of organization illustrate that there is a great need for an alternative conceptual model for the study of Black culture and human service

organizations such as grassroots movements and non-positional leadership that Ella Baker powered and stood for.

Unique Aspects of Grassroots Movements From An Organizational Perspective

The new social movements of the 1950s and 1960s have resulted in the birth of very distinctive organizations called grassroots movements. Grassroots movements are group-centered organizations rather than leader-centered organizations with organizers integrating themselves informally into communities with the intention of empowering grassroots people and encouraging their initiative, involvement, and leadership (Umoja, 1999). These grassroots movements provided support for political process models that reinforced mobilization efforts and a better way of life for people. By nature "grassroots" is fiercely resistant to central control and hierarchy, yet it can be self-sacrificing and loyal. Properly understood, properly respected, and properly organized, "grassroots" has the potential to alter a culture and make changes in society. Grassroots movements are different from formal political organizations. It is this "difference" that will highlight the very unique aspects of grassroots movements.

Culture and organizational networks are important factors in understanding the uniqueness of grassroots movements (Harris, 1999; Klandermans, 1997; Robnett, 1997). Williams (2004) proposed a link between culture (language, practices, values, and relations) in institutions (churches, families, clubs, and other associations) and African American women's participation. McCarthy and Zald (1976) state that for a variety of movement groups, religion is an important resource due to the properties of religious discourse and due to the widespread dispersion of religion among American groups.

Williams (2003) explains that many religious expressions have an inherent note of challenge in their content, simply because they do not take the world-as-it-is as an ultimate value. Williams (2003) notes that there is a transcendence built into religious worldview that can revitalize any societal arrangement. Furthermore, in American culture religious language is available to movements from several social groups. Williams (2003) states that the data on African-American women's civil rights protests in Arkansas "suggests that through their churches, women's organizations, and other indigenous institutions, African-American women cultivated social bonds that promoted the creation of social support, commitment, and activist identities that persuaded some to engage in social action" (p. 131).

In her research of the women's movement in the African American Baptist church, Higginbotham (1994) found that women in an organization constructed meanings that helped them transform their activities. Payne (1995) found that women were involved in grassroots movements through their commitment and involvement in indigenous institutional social networks like church and family. Payne (1995) argues, "once someone in networks become involved in protest, the strength of the social ties within the network was likely to draw other members of the group into the struggle" (p. 134). In his research of the civil rights movement, Morris (1984) emphasizes the important links and interpersonal ties among church ministers. Morris found that these ties and networks were mediated through preexisting community institutions and organizations. Both Payne and Higginbotham suggest that a broader definition of culture as a relational and interpretative resource may illuminate how religion and an institution

like the church provided African American women with meanings to shape their moral and political views about the kind of society that should exist (Williams, 2004).

Melucci (1985) looks at movements from a cultural aspect. He proposes that movements mobilize individuals for protest through extant relationships and the allocation of meanings and values. Robnett (1997) supports this view by stating that African American females in civil rights movement organizations use their social links in their communities to build trust between civil rights leaders and community members to promote protest mobilization.

In their (1995) research on the feminist movement, Taylor and Whittier (1995) suggest that indigenous organizational culture is very important for mobilizing people to participate in a cause. Taylor and Whittier state that women's organizational culture is a major determinant in helping women construct and sustain a movement's culture and community. Morris (1984) supports this view, however, Morris did not explain how culture within organizations advances movement participation. Polletta (1999) explains that organizations are cultural because they have a symbolic dimension that is given meaning and significance through social interaction. Klandermans (1997) expands on Polletta's explanation by stating that individuals construct meanings about everyday life that make them want to identify with the belief, values, and norms that define a particular movement organization. The emphasis on understanding how cultural content within organizations works to mobilize collective action has moved researchers to examine more specifically how these processes facilitate African American women's activism and grassroots movement (Gilkes, 1997; Higginbotham, 1994; Payne, 1995; & Sacks, 1998). Melucci (1985) describes culture and action:

> Social movements are thus action systems in that they have structures: the unity and continuity of the action would not be possible without integration and interdependence of individuals and groups, in spite of the apparent looseness of this kind of social phenomena. But movements are action systems in that their structures are built by aims, beliefs, decisions and exchanges operating in a systemic field. A collective identity is nothing else than a shared definition of the field of opportunities and constraints offered to collective action: 'shared' means constructed and negotiated through a repeated process of 'activation' of social relationships connecting actors (p. 793).

Formal organizations consist of hierarchical structures with power in the hands of a few leaders, bureaucrats, and managers who wield considerable authority over subordinates who must follow carefully laid out organizational plans. In grassroots movements, members are involved in every phase of the decision-making process, developing strategies, and organizing participation. In his work on the Mississippi freedom struggle, Payne (1995) posits that women shaped the character of grassroots activism of Mississippi utilizing the ideas of Ella Baker. Women developed policies and avoided hierarchy and other pitfalls that cut women out of decision-making positions. One of the organizing methods of grassroots movements is to canvass from door to door to speak with adults. Because of this method of organizing often scholars who advocate for the top-down analysis of leadership in traditional organizations ignore the importance of mass mobilization and grassroots movements.

The "center-woman" or "bridge woman" is a unique aspect of grassroots movements. Sacks (1988) discusses the role of women as "center-women" in grassroots organizations. Sacks describes center-women as women "who were centers and sustainers of work-based networks" (p.120). Sacks notes that many women operated as leaders but did not use the title. They preferred to work behind the scenes. Through her research, Sacks challenged the notions that leaders are those that hold leadership

positions, seen by public and state as leaders, make decisions on behalf of the organizations, and have power over followers. Sociologist and historian Belinda Robnett (1996) used the term "bridge leader" instead of "center-woman." Women activists as bridge leaders are able to cross the boundaries between the public life of a movement organization and the private life of the constituents. Several studies have indicated that in the civil rights movement, women outnumbered men in participation and often led in movement activities, however women often receded into the background in the role of the "center-woman" or "bridge leader" (Andreas, 1985; Blumberg, 1990; Kaplan, 1982; Piven & Cloward, 1977; Robnett, 1996; Sacks, 1988). Women like Ella Baker, Fannie Lou Hamer, Septima Clark, Unita Blackwell, Peggy Jean Connors, and Annie Devine served as bridge leaders between the politics of the movement organizations and the politics of rural communities. These women responded to needs of their communities and organizations. They developed strategies and coordinated the activities of their organizations (Robnett, 1996). Although both men and women were bridge leaders, this type of leadership was the only one available to women. Women made great contributions to grassroots movements within the civil rights organization.

In *Crazy for Democracy: Women in Grassroots Movements*, (1997), Temma Kaplan explains why so many people in grassroots movement are women. She emphasizes "female consciousness and Maxine Molyneux's idea of "practical gender interests," both of which explain why women are moving out of their traditional gender roles and taking on elected leaders, political authorities, and state laws. Kaplan states that apolitical women will confront authorities when they believe they are acting on behalf of their community's needs. Women will do so because women are the primary caretakers

of families, neighborhoods, and communities; and they see themselves as the ones who have to demand protection (Ackelsberg, 2001).

Nancy Naples' 1998, *Grassroots Warriors: Activists Mothering, Community Work, and the War on Poverty* is an exploration of the lives and activities of poor women who were involved in community based organizations in New York and Philadelphia during 1964 to 1974. One of the highlights of the study is when "maximum feasible participation of the poor" rather than "ending welfare as we know it" became the watchword of social policy (Ackelsberg, 2001). Naples examines the women's routes into activism through what she called "activist mother." "Activist mothering highlights the community workers gendered conceptualization of activism on behalf of their communities…. Central to their constructions of 'community' was a convergence of racial ethnic identification and class affiliation" (p. 114). Naples writes, "Activist mothering, therefore, includes self-conscious struggles against racism, sexism, and poverty" (p.114). Different routes led the women into community activism. Some women referred to their religious involvement, social work, participation into other social movements, and Black women's traditions of community care taking (Ackelsberg, 2001). The women saw their activism as empowerment and an extension of their desires to take care of families and improve their communities. Naples states, "gendered identities as women, daughters, mothers, or workers intersected with racial, ethnic, class, professional, and political identities to create a complex and oftentimes contradictory set of forces that informed their consciousness of inequality as well as motivation to fight for social justice" (p. 181). Several women were changed by their activist experiences and saw themselves as empowered citizens with the right to act on the behalf of their

communities. Empowerment of people and direct action are unique aspects of grassroots movement.

Afro-centric Considerations in Organizational Theory

Organizational theories reflect the conceptual frameworks of Western social science, which comes from Western ideology. Schiele (1990) states that by reflecting the values of western society, organizational theories for the most part are biased against African Americans and other people of color. Due to this biasness, some scholars have argued for an alternative social science model known as the Afrocentric model (Schiele, 1990). Semmes (1981) views social science as a process that allows a person to reflect and analyze human experiences from a "random impressionistic endeavor to one of systematic rigor" (p. 6). Semmes argues that social science is a method used to produce models of human behavior that can be applied to a group. The method takes its shape and structure from sociocultural and historical processes and experiences. In social science, historiography is important because events and problems are only understood and solved if placed in a sociohistorical context. Historiography provides the context and gives people a sense of continuity and direction that informs them about important factors that affect their movement and development through time and space (Semmes, 1981).

In the article *Organizational Theory From An Afrocentric Perspective,* (1990), Schiele identifies and discusses some of the characteristics of an Afrocentric organization and the extent to which these characteristics are congruent with Western theories of organizations. The Afrocentric paradigm is based on traditional African philosophical views that stress the interconnectedness and interdependency of natural phenomena. From this view all modalities and realities are seen as one and there is no separation

between spiritual and material, profane and sacred, substance and form (Asante, 1980). Asante (1980) points out that "the continuity from material to spiritual is the universal basis of the Afrocentric viewpoint" (p. 50). Schiele (1990) lists six tenets of the Afrocentric model. (1) The Afrocentric model recognizes the goodness in all people. This is similar to the human relations model that supports the view that humans are good, however the Afrocentric model does not support the scientific model, which holds that human beings must be controlled, coerced, and threatened with punishment to work. The Afrocentric model believes people have the capacity for self-mastery, self-direction, and self-regulation. From an Afrocentric organizational view, there would be no rigid supervision and control of people. (2) As it relates to organizational theory, the Afrocentric model emphasizes the spirituality of organizational members. Boykins and Tom's (1985) study state that spirituality is "conducting one's life as though its essence were vitalistic rather than mechanistic and as though transcending forces significantly govern the lives of people" (Schiele, 1990, p. 152). Spirituality and morality are viewed as one. If spirituality means morality, then the Afrocentric model recognizes organizational morality. In the Afrocentric model, organizational members' spirituality is important in shaping their mental and physical performance (3) Human beings are conceived collectively. Collective survival and organizational unity are very important. Group consensus is also important because it encourages equal distribution of power. Although the human relations model supports the participation of subordinates in decision-making and argues against hierarchical structure and division of labor, it still advocates for leaders and subordinates. (4) The affective epistemology nature of the Afrocentric model has significant implication for evaluating worker performance. Both

quantitative and qualitative measures are appropriate for determining worker performance in Afrocentric organizations. (5) Humans are influenced by positive and negative life experiences resulting from social interaction. Based on this interaction, one's emotions can make one act in a manner that is not rational. In this situation, the Afrocentric model would not place emphasis on efficiency or rationality. It would (a) recognize the important role of affect in the lives of people, (b) realize that people are not infallible, impervious super beings, and (c) downplay time and speed because of its de-emphasis on the rate of production. (6) Maintain interpersonal relationship that is considered an important value in the Afrocentric model. Meaningful interpersonal relationship would provide a community with a model for unity through the practice of an interpersonal, human-centered axiology.

The tenets presented by Schiele (1990) come from the works of scholars (Akbar, 1976, 1984, 1985; Asante, 1980a, 1980b, 1988; Baldwin, 1981, 1986; Boykin & Toms, 1985; Dixon, 1976; Hale, 1982; Khatib, Akbar, McGee, & Nobles, 1979; Mbiti, 1970; Nichols, 1976; Nobles, 1978; Williams, 1981). Semmes (1981) also notes that Black social scientists such as Jones (1972), Lander (1973), and Staples, (1976) have made efforts to develop a framework for Black social scientific inquiry. Semmes states, "such endeavors are important and necessary if social science is to eventually aid in the process of culture building, self-determination and liberation for Black people" (p. 7).

The Role of Men in the Afrocentric Model

Baker was born into a family with a tradition of social consciousness. Her grandfather was a preacher with his own church. He was an activist who tried to create a

model of a Black community and who mortgaged his farm after a flood so that he could buy food for other families. Baker (1977) stated:

> The little community Elums where my mother grew up and where my grandfather, who had bargained or whatever else for a large tract of the old slave plantation which was broken up into plots of forty and fifty acres. And his relatives settled on it. This was to a large extent, by comparison, an independent community; they were independent farmers. But they also went in for the practice of cooperative… Helping each other. When I came along, for instance, I don't think there was but one threshing machine for threshing the wheat. And so today they might be on Grandpa's place, and all the people who had wheat who needed the thresher would be there, or at least from those families. And then they would move around. There was a great deal of what might have been a cooperative type of relationship at that stage…(p. 19).

Grandfather Ross was the head of the church and his family. He assisted neighbors who were less fortunate. Baker's grandfather gave the land for the school in Warrenton that Baker's mother worked in as a teacher. Baker (1977) stated: "My mother's father, being a minister, had several churches, and he gave the land for the school" (p. 5). Baker's grandfather demonstrated spirituality, collective survival, and unity that are important characteristics of the Afrocentric model and are necessary for an organization to survive. Baker's father was forced to live away from home because of his job and having to provide for his family. Baker remembered her father as a gentle and kind man, who spent time with his children whenever he was home. From her grandfather and father, Baker learned about kindness, valuing, helping, and nurturing people to believe in their own confidence to make changes in their lives. Baker was influenced by positive life experiences resulting from social interaction with the men in her childhood. She took these experiences and used them in her work.

Baker's relationship with Martin Luther King, Jr. was very different from the relationship that she had with her grandfather and father. Baker with her long history of experience as an activist had seen the plight and suffering of poor Blacks. Baker did not glorify King who was the leader of SCLC. Baker and King came out of two different positions in the Black church. King was a minister who was educated and trained to take a lead position in the church and Baker's activism can be traced back to the influence of her childhood years, especially the influence of her grandfather and mother who were devout Baptists in North Carolina. King's charismatic style and Baker's grassroots style were addressing the same issues from different angles. Baker (1968) stated, "Martin had become the great symbol, you know, and of course, out of the old background that the minister is the leader." Martin Luther King, Jr. did not fit as neatly in the afrocentric model as might have been expected.

Afrocentric Model and Western Organizational Models

There are major differences between the Afrocentric model and Western organizational models. One main difference is Western organizations' focus on organizational productivity: how fast, how plentifully, how well something is produced or, in the case of human relations organizational approach, how efficiently people are processed, sustained, or changed (Schiele, 1990). This focus reflects the conceptual framework of Max Weber's (1946) bureaucracy principle of rationality, Frederick Winslow Taylor's (1916) scientific management of maximum productivity, Douglas McGregor's (1960) Theory X and Theory Y, Rensis Likert's (1961) four levels of

organizations and making use of human assets, and Fayol's (1983) attributes of a highly effective organization.

Another difference is the emphasis on individual organization member. Part of the focus on "individual" is because of the way "individual" is perceived in Western social science and Western society (Schiele 1990). According to Akbar's (1984) study "individualism is emphasized in the Eurocentric model because human identity is conceived insularly: It is assumed that the individual can be understood separate from others" (p. 148). Akbar states, "corporate identity—relationship with significant others such as family members, community members, and friends—is of secondary importance in conceiving the individual" (p. 148). The Afrocentric model views individual identity as collective, but it does not reject the idea of uniqueness, however it rejects the notion that the individual can be understood separate from others (Schiele 1990). An example of collective identity is Mbiti's (1970) study "I am because we are and because we are, therefore I am" (p. 149).

In Afrocentric model, organizational and group survival replaces productivity. Therefore quality or efficiency would not define organizational normality. Instead, in the Afrocentric model organizational normality would be defined by the way the organization preserves itself (Schiele, 1990). Survival is more important than goal attainment in the Afrocentric model. "Survival transcends the boundaries of the organization and extends into the community" (Schiele, 1990, p. 150). The community and the organization are seen as one and the organization's goal is reflected in the community's goal. When this happens, the "survival of the organization is significantly

related to the community" (Schiele, 1990, p. 151). In the Afrocentric model collective survival involves a combination of individual, organizational, and community identity.

Summary

Chapter four contains a discussion on organizational theory and the different models of organization and their relationship to my study. I have described the unique aspects of grassroots movement and explained the importance of culture and organizational networks in grassroots movements. In this chapter a contrast between formal organizations and grassroots movements is presented to show why Ella Baker preferred grassroots movement to the more formal organizational setting. The importance of the "center woman" or "bridge woman" is a vital link in grassroots movement. She is the person who sustains the movement by networking with others in the movement. Ella Baker in her role as a "center woman" or "bridge woman" was the sustainer or bridge between the organization and local people. The Afrocentric model is discussed as an alternative organizational model for African Americans because organizational theories are biased against people of color.

CHAPTER FIVE – SOCIAL ACTIVISM AND FEMINISM

Introduction

When people join a group or organization they are expected to identify with the group, share the group's norms and values, and trust group members. This is very important in building social capital and civic action. Gittell, Bustamante, & Steefy, (2000) state that social capital accumulates by associating with others, and when this happens the result is civic action. By building networks, members in a group or organization can increase the strength of their social capital. When a group builds social capital, the group can translate that capital into votes to affect changes (Gittell, 1998). Gittell, et al. (2000) argue, "broadened participation that includes otherwise marginal groups in a society is essential to strengthening democracy" (p. 124).

Women were the major participants in many local civil rights and community groups in America in the 1950s and 1960s. They advocated for policies and influenced decisions that made their communities better places for their families to live in. Gittell et al., (2002) state, "our research finds that women-led groups define their community development efforts broadly and holistically and emphasize community participation and local democracy" (p. 124). Researchers Bookman and Morgen (1988), and West and Blumberg (1990), have redefined women's social protest to include women's actions to end suffering and challenge injustices through work in their communities, workplaces, and churches. Scholars (Cannon, 1994; Eck & Jain 1987; Gillespie, 1995; Winter, Lummis & Stokes, 1994) have put forward the idea that some women look at social

action as a part of their spirituality and they use the resources of their churches to work for social change.

From slavery to the 21st century, women were the major participants in community organization and social activism. Although women were not recognized as leaders, they were strong advocates for community control of local services. Women pursued neighborhood renewal in the face of adverse conditions and lack of community growth. Women were not given recognition for promoting community development because their community-based organizations were never fully recognized or appreciated. Added to that, women's community work was not considered important.

Racism and Class Discrimination

Historically, Black men, like Black women, have been discriminated against and excluded from full participation in the public sphere and denied access to authority. Due to racism, Black exclusionary laws were put into place to reaffirm Black male inferiority and deny them their full rights as American citizens. Moynihan (1965) notes that Black exclusionary laws were aimed primarily at defining and keeping the Black man in his place. Because slavery and White male dominance coexisted in America, Black man as men were viewed as a threat to White male superiority. The lynching and violence against Black men and the rape and sexual exploitation of Black women were deliberate acts to intensify Black male powerlessness and inferiority (Lewis, 1977). Racism excluded Black men and women from participation in the public sphere. This Black experience suggests that differential participation in the public sphere is a symptom of structural inequality (Lewis, 1977). Blacks had unequal access to power and resources

compared to Whites. The restrictions placed on Blacks in American society have produced similarities in experiences of Black men and women, however there are differences that can be credited to Black women being female. As Black men grapple to achieve social justice and equality with White men, Black women were pushed to the back of the bus (Richman, 1974). Racial barriers, sexism, and class discrimination have forced Black women in a subordinate position in a society where women as a group are treated as second class citizens with Black women occupying the bottom of the social and economic ladder.

Race as a tool for the oppression of Black people has its roots in slavery. In the master/slave relationship, slaves were exploited and oppressed by their masters for capitalist gains. Also, owning slaves showcased a master's social class. The role of race in slavery helped in shaping class and constructing gender. Sojourner Truth, a reformer, and ex-slave highlighted the plight of Black women in her speech at an 1851 women's convention in Akron, Ohio. Truth showed the racism in gender under a system of class and sexist rule (Davis, 1983). Truth was able to refute the claim made by men who attended the meeting that women were helpless without men. Truth asked the question: "Ain't I a Woman?"

> Look at me! Look at my arm. I have ploughed, and planted, and gathered into barns and no man could lead me! And ain't I a woman? I could work as much and eat as much as a man-when I could get it-and bear the lash as well! And ain't I a woman? I have borne thirteen children and seen them sold off to slavery, and when I cried out with my mother's grief, none but Jesus heard me! And ain't I a woman? (Davis, 1983, p. 61).

In repeating the question "Ain't I a Woman" four times, Truth exposed the racism and class bias in the woman's movement. All women were not White and all women did not

live in a comfortable middle class environment enjoying material comforts. Although Truth was Black and an ex-slave, she was still a woman (Davis, 1983). Black slave women experienced slavery through gendered lives. They had children, took care of them, did domestic work and field work, and they were raped by the White slave master and Black slave men because of their gender. Gender colored by race is linked to one's personal identity and status. "For both Black and White women, gendered identity was reconstructed and represented in very different, indeed antagonistic, racialized contexts" (Higginbotham, 1992, p. 258).

America with its multi-ethic population is called the great melting pot where people of all different races and cultures come together. However, amidst this great melting pot in this great country, severe racial disparities exist. bell hooks (1981) states:

> American women of all races are socialized to think of racism solely in the context of race hatred. Specifically in the case of Black and White people, the term racism is usually seen as synonymous with discrimination or prejudice against Black people by White people. For most women, the first knowledge of racism as institutionalized oppression is engendered either by direct personal experience or through information gleaned from conversations, books, television, or movies. Consequently the American woman's understanding of racism as a political tool of colonialism and imperialism is severely limited. To experience the pain of race hatred or to witness that pain is not to understand its origin, evolution, or impact on world history. The inability of American women to understand racism in the context of American politics is not due to any inherent deficiency in woman's psyche. It merely reflects the extent of our victimization (p.119).

The social status of Black and White women in the United States has never been the same. In the nineteenth century and early twentieth century, the life experiences of Black and White American women had very few similarities. Although Black and White women were subjected to sexism, as victims of racism, Black women struggled with racial and economic oppression. Higginbotham (1992) points out that although women's

studies have universalized women's culture and oppression, White women did not experience race and class oppression the same way as Black women, and White women's issues were not the same as Black women's issues. Black women faced racism, sexism, and job discrimination much more than White women. Palmer (1983) supports this view by stating that White feminists engaged in issues that did not seem so compelling to Black women because White feminist's perspectives led theory and action to focus on the sexist behavior and preconceptions of men and to view all men as equivalent oppressors. However, Black women responded to White women by stating that White feminists theory and practice did not recognize White men in American society as the beneficiaries of sexism and racism. White women's emphasis on sexism allowed them to "deny their own history of racism and the benefits that White women have gained at the expense of Black women" (Palmer, 1983, p. 154). Black women saw racism as a powerful instrument that is used to subordinate them and because of this they viewed the women's liberation movement with distrust (Lewis, 1977).

Black women are members of two subordinate groups in society. They are members of the group called "women" and they are members of the group labeled "Black." Lewis (1977) states that Black women are in opposition with the dominant sexual group, which is "men," and a dominant racial group, which is "White women." Black men are also part of the dominant group that is "men." However, the interests of Black women as "Blacks" have been more important than the interests of Black women as "women" (Lewis, 1977). Although Black women and White women are members of the group "women," they do not share the same interests because racism has placed Black women in a subordinate position to White women. Cade Bambara (1971) asks: " How

relevant are the truths, the experiences, the findings of White women to Black women? I don't know that our priorities are the same, that our concerns and methods are the same" (p. 28). Black women overlooked the sexist manner in which they were treated by Black men and supported Black men instead of supporting White women.

Before the 1960s, race served as a symbol for class. Even though all Whites in the South were not of the same class, they united around the banner of White supremacy (Higginbotham, 1992). In the late nineteenth century and twentieth century, Whites in the North restricted Black men and women to low paying jobs. The different class positions of Blacks were not important. Higginbotham (1992) states, "an entire system of cultural preconceptions disregarded these complexities and tensions by grouping all Blacks into a normative well of inferiority and subservience (p. 259).

Several historians argued that in the United States, racial division of labor began as a form of class exploitation, which was covered in an ideology of racial inferiority (Thornton-Dill, 1983). The scholarly articles and books that are explored in this study clearly highlight the experiences of Blacks, especially Black women. In America, Black women struggled under a system of racism and sexism that was meant to undermine their economic, social, and psychological needs. Those who sought to undermine women's progress in America did so through oppression. The means of oppression varied across race and sex lines. White women did not understand the relationship between racism and sexism, however because Black women had to struggle daily against racism and sexism, they understood the relationship between the two. White women passively complied with racism and in doing so they undermined their own cause and their relationship with Black women.

Feminist Theory

> If Black and White feminists are going to speak female accountability, I believe the word racism must be seized, grasped in our bare hands, ripped out of the sterile or defensive consciousness in which it so often grows, and transplanted so that it can yield new insights for our lives and our movement. An analysis that places the guilt for active domination, physical and institutional violence, and the justifications embedded in myth and language, on White women not only compounds false consciousness; it allows us all to deny or neglect the charged connection among Black and White women from the historical conditions of slavery on, and it impedes any real discussion of women's instrumentality in a system which oppresses all women and in which hatred of women is also embedded in myth, folklore and language.
>
> Adrienne Rich, 1976

The 1830s were years of intense resistance to oppression. There were protests and strikes in the textile factories in the North by women and children. Also, 1831 was the year of the Nat Turner revolt by Black men and women who were dissatisfied with their slave lives. The abolitionist movement was born in 1831. White women begin to resist their second-class treatment by White men. White women struggled for the rights to education and careers outside of their homes. Married White women felt that marriage was oppressive and this was a basis for developing a bond with the Black slaves who were also oppressed (Davis, 1983). Several White women became involved in the abolitionist movement and the anti-slavery campaign. In 1833, Prudence Crandall, a White schoolteacher in Canterbury, Connecticut, went against the wishes of the people in her town and opened her school to Black students. Crandall violated the code for racial segregation and the proper way for a White lady to behave (Davis, 1983). Crandall defended Black people's rights to an education and was subsequently arrested and her school was shut down. By then, Crandall was considered victorious in fighting the

authorities on behalf of Black people (Davis, 1983). Crandall's example served as a ray of hope for other White women who were fighting for their own liberation from White men. Davis states:

> Prudence Crandall's unswerving defense of Black people's right to learn was a dramatic example—a more powerful example than ever could have been imagined—for White women who were suffering the birth pangs of political consciousness. Lucidly and eloquently, her actions spoke of vast possibilities for liberation if White women en masse would join hands with their Black sisters (p. 36).

In 1833, Lucretia Mott organized the founding meeting of the Philadelphia Female Anti-Slavery Society. Mott became one of the leading figures in the anti-slavery movement because of her commitment to abolitionism. Mott's home was a station for the Underground Railroad. Other White women followed Mott's example and started women's groups and became deeply involved in the abolitionist movement. Another abolitionist in the anti-slavery movement was Maria Chapman Weston. She started the Boston Female Anti-Slavery Society. Several other White women put their lives at risk by becoming involved in the anti-slavery movement. Two White sisters from a slave holding family in South Carolina, Sarah and Angelina Grimke, defended the rights of all women—Black and White—to publicly denounce slavery. These two sisters had witnessed slavery first hand. The Grimkes were particularly concerned about the sexual exploitation of Black slave women (hooks, 1981). Although the Grimkes joined the abolitionist movement in 1836 and were very passionate about ending slavery and exposing the inhuman treatment of Black people, due to Victorian social convention governing behavior, they were unable to graphically describe the cruelty and horrors of slavery that were inflicted on the Black slave woman (hooks, 1981). Long before White women's mass opposition to male supremacy and oppression, the Grimke sisters

encouraged women to resist male supremacy and the inferior position in which society has placed women. The anti-slavery movement gave White middle class women the opportunity to work on a cause that was outside their duties of wife, mother, and homemaker.

Elizabeth Cady Stanton, a leading White feminist was encouraged by her father to study Greek and Mathematics and learn horseback riding, all of which was generally barred to girls (Davis, 1983, p. 49). Stanton was having a frustrating life because marriage and motherhood had put an end to plans and goals that she had set for herself as a single woman. Stanton is an example of the women that Betty Friedan referred to in her book, *The Feminine Mystique*, 1963, when she wrote about "the problem that has no name" (hooks, 1981). Stanton wanted to be more than a homemaker. "This White middle class discontent did not fit into the categories of problems already named by (men)" (Ardener, 1975, p. 63). In 1848, Elizabeth Cady Stanton was one of the co-organizers of the Seneca Falls Convention. It was because of the contradiction in her life and the lives of several other middle and upper class White women that these women answered the call to attend the Seneca Falls Convention to fight for equality (Davis, 1983). Although a Black man attended the Seneca Falls Convention, Black women did not attend.

The main focus of the Seneca Falls Declaration was the institution of marriage and its negative effects on women. Marriage took away women's property rights making wives economically and morally dependent on their husbands. Husbands had the right to punish their wives, and the laws of separation and divorce were based on male supremacy (Davis, 1983). The Seneca Falls Declaration stated that because of women's inferior position within marriage, they were not treated equally in educational institutions,

professions, and on the job market. Profession like law, medicine, and theology were inaccessible to women. Also, this dependence on husbands left women with little self-respect (Davis, 1983). However, the Declaration ignored the plight of working class White women and Black women in the North and South who were struggling against slavery, and racial and economic oppression. The Declaration disregarded the circumstances of women outside the social class of bourgeois White women. White women's struggle for education and the attendance of Black girls in Prudence Crandall's school showed that both Black and White women were united in their desire for an education. However, this connection to unity for an education was not recognized at the Seneca Falls Convention.

The absence of Black women at the Seneca Falls convention was noted. The middle and upper class White woman organized a women's movement that demanded changes in society. However, these women were racists because they regarded women who were not White as "others." Barbara Christian, a Black feminist critic asserts that the Black slave female became the basis for the definition of American society's "other" (Christian, 1985, p. 160). Referring to African American women as "other" gives justification for race, class, and gender oppression. The sisterhood and changes in American society that the women in the movement envisioned did not take place and the race and sex relationships that were already established in American society took on a different form of feminism (hooks, 1981).

Throughout the late 1840s to 1850s, White women abolitionists such as Angelina and Sarah Grimke criticized several female anti-slavery groups for ignoring the plight of Black women. In 1848, Frederick Douglass' daughter was barred from attending classes

in a seminary in Rochester, New York with her White classmates. Ironically, the principal who barred Douglass' daughter from classes was a White abolitionist woman. Even then, the abolitionist movement failed to prohibit racism within the organization (Davis, 1983). During the 1850s, there were several women movement conventions. Sojourner Truth appeared at many of these meetings and addressed the participants. She encouraged women to fight for their freedom. Several Black women began their campaign for freedom and equality—Jane Lewis rescued several slaves by rowing them across the Ohio River; Frances E. W. Harper, a lecturer, worked with the antislavery movement; Charlotte Forten, an educator was an abolitionist; and Sarah Parker Remond lectured against slavery and influenced public opinion (Davis, 1983). African American female abolitionists' collective feminist consciousness blossomed because they "campaigned for equal rights within the context of organized Black abolitionism" (Yee, 1992).

White leaders of the women's movement did not see the relationship between the enslavement of Black people in the South, the economic oppression of Black people in the North, and racist and sexist oppression of all women. They did not support White-working class women even though many of theses women were members of the abolitionist movement. Leaders of the women's movement failed to integrate their anti-slavery consciousness into their analysis of oppression (Davis, 1983).

Before the Civil War, almost all White women who were supporters of equality for all women were abolitionists. Some of these women were not antiracists. These women were motivated by religious and moral beliefs to take a stand against slavery, however, they did not want to end racial hierarchy or provide citizenship to all freed

slaves. Because many White abolitionists were not antiracists, the relationship between Black and White activists was strained (Hurtado, 1989). When the Civil War started in 1861, leaders of the women's rights defended the Union. Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Susan B. Anthony, and Lucretia Mott agreed that the Civil War could end quickly by emancipating the slaves and encouraging them to join the Union Army. Susan B. Anthony made a resolution and linked the rights of women to the liberation of Black people. "The resolution stated that there can never be true peace in the Republic until the civil and political rights of all citizens of African descent and all women are practically established" (Davis, 1983, p. 67). Anthony's resolution may have been motivated from fear that the White woman might be left behind if the slaves are freed.

After the Civil War in 1865, the strained relationship between Black and White women involved in the struggle for equal rights erupted. Leaders of the women's movement believed that emancipation had made Black people equal to White women, and if Black men get the vote, that would make Black men superior to White women, therefore White women movement leaders opposed Black male suffrage. The abolition of slavery did not make racism and economic oppression disappear from Black people's lives. When the Union Army won the war, Stanton demanded suffrage for women. The Republican Party was not interested in giving suffrage to women or Black people because the Republicans' main priority was in getting rid of the slave holders in the South and controlling the Nation. The war between the North and the South was a war by capitalists who sought to control America. Therefore the Republicans did not support the liberation of Black people.

Negative Images of Black Women

White feminist theory has not explained fully the conditions of Black women. Because in theory, the words "women' and "men" are used to refer to both Black and White people. However, the definition of "women" is different for White women and Black women. The dual meaning of "women" is based on race. However, the word "woman" for Black women has its historical meaning in slavery. Black women worked in the slave master's house and in the fields; they were punished and raped; and they were given the names Black mammy, jezebel, whore, superwoman, and Black she devil.

The dominant group to maintain control over Black women and to reinforce Black women's inferiority constructed negative images of Black women. Hill-Collins (2000) states, that since Black and White women were very important to the continuation of slavery, the controlling images of Black women masked the social relations that affected both Black and White women. The mammy image was created to exploit Black women and subject them to a long history of domestic work. Hill-Collins (2000) describes the Black mammy as a faithful, obedient, domestic servant who lovingly cared for her White master's children much better than she cared for her own children. This is the dominant group's perception of the ideal Black female relationship to elite White male power. The mammy image was important in race, class, and gender oppression because the Black woman in her role as mammy was also modeling to her own children, especially her daughters, their places in American society, thereby perpetuating racial oppression to her children. Black slave women may have accepted the mammy role in their work situations, but within their own families, they taught their children something quite different. Although Ella Baker's maternal and paternal grandparents were slaves, Baker's

mother attended school and studied to be a teacher. She did not have a college education because at that time, a college degree was not needed to become a teacher in a Black school. Baker's mother never considered working after she got married. Baker as a child was not exposed to the Black mammy who accepted her subordination to the dominant group because her mother stayed at home and nurtured Baker and her siblings. Baker (1977) states:

> No, she didn't consider teaching in Norfolk. I don't know whether the offspring may have begun to come, but, as I said, I heard her say there were eight births. And it could well be also that my father at that stage, in order to consider himself the keeper of the home, like many people were, didn't want their wives to work. You see, people take on the patterns of those whom they escape from, as you well know. And so this was no doubt a part of that…

The mammy image was not quite successful in controlling Black women's thoughts, actions, and child-rearing practices because Black women discouraged their children from doing domestic work and showing deferential treatment to Whites.

Other images used to categorized and described Black women were jezebel, whore, and Black she devil. Efforts to control Black women lay in the heart of their sexuality (Hill-Collins, 2000). Negative images of Black women relegated all Black women to being aggressively and excessively sexual. By portraying Black women as animals with uncontrollable sexual appetites, White slave masters were able to exploit Black slave women sexually and financially. By forcing Black slave women to care and nurture White children, White slave masters found a way to effectively relegated Black women to being "breeders" and prevented Black slave women from effectively caring and nurturing their own children. During slavery, the Black woman was seen as a

superwoman: a physically strong woman working in the fields all day, taking care of the master's children, her children, and her man.

Even today, negative images are still used to describe Black women (intellectuals and non intellectuals). African American women are referred to as hoochie-mama, hot-mama, welfare queen, lazy, gold-digger, slut, and whore. These images of Black women are used to justify the social practices that enhance the domination of Black women in the United States and other countries. In Zora Neale Hurston's (1937) *Their Eyes Were Watching God,* Nanny expresses what it means to be a Black woman.

> "You know, honey, us colored folks is branches without roots that makes things come round in queer ways. You in particular. Ah was born back due in slavery so it wasn't for me to fulfill my dreams of whut a woman oughta be and to do. Dat's one of de hold-backs of slavery. But nothing can't stop you from wishin'. You can't beat nobody down so low till you can rob 'em of they will. Ah didn't want to be used for a work-ox and a brood-sow and Ah didn't want mah daughter used dat way neither. It sho wasn't mah will for things to happen lak they did Ah wanted to preach a great sermon about colored woman sittin' on high, But they wasn't no pulpit for me. Freedom found me wid a baby in mah arms,…Ah been waitin' a long time, Janie, but nothin' Ah been through ain't too much if you just take a stand on high ground lah Ah dreamed (p. 16).

Nanny resisted the controlling images of "work-ox" and "brood-sow," but being a slave woman prevented her from fulfilling her dreams of what a woman should be and do. Like many slave women, Nanny tried to pass on the vision of freedom from controlling images to her daughter.

Dual Images of Womanhood

In the nineteenth century, there was a symbolic division between "good women" and "bad women" based on race and class. The "good women" were pure, clean, sexually repressed, and fragile. These good women were wives, mothers, and spinsters who were

all dependent on men. The "bad women" were dirty, physically strong, and knowledgeable about evil in the world. Bad women were whores, laborers, and single mothers who worked for a living and were socially and politically powerless (Palmer, 1983). Because of the dual images of womanhood, White women whose class allowed it formed their identities around "good women." They accepted their difference from Black women and this difference was one of superiority. This difference of superiority divided White women and Black women.

Hurtado (1989) claims that there is another difference between White women and Black women that affected their relationship with each other. This difference is in their past. Black women have a past, culture, religion, tradition, and history in Africa. They can refer to slavery as a specific historical event in the beginning of their subordination and oppression. White women's subordination did not come out of slavery. White women's subordination came out of their marriage to White men. White women have successfully built feminist theory and in doing so they have obtained political results when they protested their subordination. However in protesting their subordination, White women did not fully support Black women in their struggle against oppression. White women continue to support White male racist and sexist behaviors towards Black women.

hooks (2000) states that even today, White women who dominate feminist discourse do not question whether or not their perspective on women's reality is true to the lived experiences of all women as a collective group. White feminists are not even aware of the extent to which their theories reflect race and class biases. The writings of several White feminists present their racist views because they are reinforcing White

supremacy and denying the possibility that women will bond across ethnic and racial boundaries (hooks 2000). White supremacy has paved the road for class structure in American society; yet White feminist writers do not understand that White supremacy has resulted in class structure, and racial, sexual, and economic oppression of African Americans in a capitalist country. In the book *Dreamers and Dealers* (1979), Leah Fritz claims that suffering under sexism is a common bond that all women share. hooks (2000) refutes this claim and points out that while women as a group is bound by sexual oppression; sexual oppression does not create a bond between Black and White women because "there is much evidence substantiating the reality that race and class identity creates differences in quality of life, social status, and lifestyle that takes precedence over the common experience women share—differences that rarely transcends" (p. 4).

In concluding, this researcher speculates that Black and White women will not be able to be an ally with each other unless they escape the powerful identification of "good women" and "bad women" that have such a stronghold on American society. Also, while women must examine and analyze the structure that differentiates them, politically as a group women must fight race, class, and sexist issues. This seems like an overwhelming task, but it is the only way for Black and White women to avoid the mistakes of the past and move forward to the formation of a sisterhood among all women regardless of color, race, or class. It is only when women try to understand the struggles that are not part of their own personal needs and priorities that they begin to understand and experience the needs and priorities of other women.

Black Feminist Standpoint

Sojourner Truth, Harriet Tubman, Anna Julia Cooper, Ida Wells Barnett, Maria Stewart, Sarah Parker Remond, Mary Church Terrell, Ella Baker, Fannie Lou Hamer, and Septima Clark are just a few of the names from a list of distinguished African American activists. These women together with other African American women worked to create and support Black activist tradition and Black feminist thought in America. Black women have had a long continuous struggle of resistance against all types of oppression. This resistance to overcome oppression is only possible because of Black women's shared standpoint about what oppression means and how to overcome it.

The works of several Black contemporary feminist scholars have highlighted the central concepts of Black women's standpoint. Both political and epistemological issues have influenced the social construction of Black feminist thought (Hill-Collins, 1989). Black feminist epistemology is viewed as grounded in the intellectual traditions and experiences of African American women forged at the margins of race, class, and gender. Hill-Collins points out that African American women have developed their own interpretation of Black women's oppression by using alternative ways of generating and confirming knowledge itself. Hill-Collins maintains that Black women's resistance challenges two frequently used approaches to studying the consciousness of oppressed groups: (1) that subordinate groups identify with the powerful and have no valid independent interpretation of their own oppression and (2) the oppressed are less human than their oppressors and are therefore less capable of their own standpoint. Both approaches show the oppressors as seeing oppressed groups as incapable of expressing their own consciousness in the face of their subordination. However, scholars like Hill-

Collins (1986), Davis (1983), Fox-Genovese (1986), Hartsock (1983), Hooks (1981), Townsend-Gilkes (1985), and Westkott's (1979) maintain that Black women have never been willing participants in their oppression and subordination. These works confirmed that Black women have a self-defined standpoint of their oppression. Black women's standpoint of their oppression is characterized by (1) the experiences that Black women have encountered in their everyday living, and (2) Black women's experiences that resulted in a Black feminist consciousness (Hill-Collins, 1989).

Hill-Collins (1989) explains that although some African American women occupy positions that motivate a unique standpoint, being able to express a Black feminist standpoint is sometimes difficult because the dominant group has an interest in suppressing and discrediting standpoints to prevent oppressed groups from resisting oppression. Berger and Luckmann's study (1966) provides a useful approach in explaining the relationship between Black women's standpoint and Black feminist thought with the argument that knowledge exists on two levels.

> The first level includes the everyday, taken-for-granted knowledge shared by members of a given group…. Black feminist thought, by extension, represents a second level of knowledge, the more specialized knowledge furnished by experts who are part of a group and who express the group's standpoint. The two levels of knowledge are interdependent; while Black feminist thought articulates the taken-for-granted knowledge of African-American women, it also encourages all Black women to create new self-definitions that validate a Black women's standpoint (Hill-Collins, 1989, p. 750).

The two types of knowledge are interdependent. While Black feminist thought expresses the taken-for-granted knowledge shared by African American women, the consciousness of Black women may be transformed by such thought. The actions of Black educated women in Black women's organizations represent this special relationship between Black

women intellectuals and the wider community of Black women. Intellectual Black women were shaped by and helped shape the wider group of African American women. The community in which she lived shaped Ella Baker's social and political outlook. In return, Baker engaged in grassroots and political activism to reach poor Blacks in their struggle against racial oppression. Although intellectual Black women did not represent all Black women, they developed a cultural and historic view of Black women's condition. The work that African American women did illustrates a joining of intellectualism and activism that results in Black women's standpoint. Therefore, Black feminist standpoint has proved that Black women can produce their own specialized knowledge in the face of oppression and subordination.

African American women share a common experience of being Black women in a society that looks down on people of color. Because of this common experience, Black women in America are able to stimulate a distinctive consciousness based on the experiences of being Black in American society.

Ella Baker and Feminism

Ella Baker had many female role models in her life: her grandmother, mother, aunts, and the churchwomen in Littleton, North Carolina. These women were rebellious, self-assured, and independent. They firmly believed in what they did. Baker's grandmother did not marry the man chosen for her. Baker's mother left Norfolk, Virginia to be nearer to relatives and make a better life for her children even though her husband (Baker's father) was not moving with his family because of his job. The churchwomen in

Littleton, North Carolina worked to help others who were less fortunate. These Black women were Baker's role models. (Grant, 1998; Ransby, 2003).

Baker fell in love and married T. J. Roberts. This part of Baker's private life is mysterious because there is limited information about her marriage to T. J. Roberts. Baker never talked about her marriage and very few people knew about it (Grant, 1998; Ransby, 2003). Baker's marriage was not a traditional marriage. Baker did not assume her husband's name, which was unusual for the 1930s. She was Miss Baker to everyone. Baker stated:

> I had something of what you might call a name. And I think as I look back in reflection, there may have been a factor of, uh, it may have been an ego factor. I don't know. I never considered myself a feminist in the sense of championing the rights of women, but I may have felt the need to exercise this right by retaining my name (Grant, 1998, p. 40).

On one of the rare occasions that Baker spoke about her marriage to SNCC activists Mary King and Bobbi Yancy, Baker said, "I have always been very happy that I didn't change my name. I didn't think that I *belonged* to any man" (King, 1987, p. 455).

Baker did not always live in the same house or city with her husband. She did not stay home to perform wifely duties that were expected of women in the 1930s. She continued with her activism, traveling all over the country for the NAACP. In interviews, Baker minimized the importance of her marriage and refused to answer questions about her private life. When Baker was questioned about her husband's job, she responded, "Don't ask too many personal questions" (Baker, 1977, p. 58). Whatever Baker's reasons for keeping her marriage private, it was clear that Baker did not like the traditional confines of married life as it was related to women at the time.

In a discussion about her mother's married life, Baker said that her mother was an intellectual woman who gave up her dreams and a teaching career because of marriage and family commitments. Baker (1977) stated, "My mother gave birth to eight children, but there were only four that lived…. There were three of us that lived to maturity" (p. 8). Baker continued, "My mother was a very positive and sort of aggressive person…she was a very good student…she was particularly articulate…she was the one who taught us to read" (p. 13). Maybe Baker was intent on not following in her mother's footsteps. She did not have children of her own, although she raised her niece Jackie from nine years old to adulthood. When Baker traveled she made arrangements for her husband or a neighbor to take care of Jackie. Baker had an unrestricted marital arrangement and an untraditional home, which would make Baker a feminist.

Although Baker worked closely with men in the civil rights movement, she enjoyed the company of her women friends, especially Black feminist and activist Pauli Murray. Baker's women friends provided the sisterhood that she needed to sustain her in the civil rights movement where patriarchal male leaders in the NAACP and SCLC did not take her ideas seriously.

Ella Baker was not a feminist in the true sense. She was an activist fighting for a better life for poor Black people. At the height of her career, Baker came across as a feminist because she fought on the frontlines of the Black Freedom Movement in America for over sixty years. She was involved in radical political activities from the moment she arrived in Harlem in 1927 and throughout her adult life. Because of Baker's unconventional and unrestricted lifestyle in the 1930s to the 1950s, she appeared to be a feminist by action. Baker did not take a position as a feminist. Her friend Taitt-Magubane

(2007) said that she would never use the word "feminist" to describe Baker because Baker was just a woman who was ahead of the times.

Historical Overview of the Black Church

> The Black pilgrimage in America was made less onerous because of their religion. Their religion was the organizing principle around which their life was structured. Their church was their school, their forum, their political arena, their social club, their art gallery, their conservatory of music. It was lyceum and gymnasium as well as sanctorum. Their religion was the peculiar sustaining force that gave them the strength to endure when endurance gave no promise, and the courage to be creative in the face of their own dehumanization (Wilmore, 1973).

An in-depth research of Historical Census Statistics for demographics on rural churches in the "Black Belt" area from 1900–1960 did not provide reliable statistical data about rural Black churches' size, attendance, and church programs. This is the case for many Black churches except the African Methodist Episcopal Church. Lincoln and Mamiya (1988) also found that there is not much data on the finances of Black churches; the education, income and occupational status of the Black clergy; and the kinds of groups and programs that support the churches' internal life and community outreach. There is a lack of reliable statistical data on Black churches. In 1978, Lincoln and Mamiya conducted a national survey on Black churches in the United States focusing on the seven mainline denominations that comprised the core of the Black Church. The survey was carried out in both urban and rural America. The rural part of the survey was carried out in the Southern Black Belt counties. The center of Deep Southern United States stretching north of Virginia to Alabama and Mississippi, and west as far as Louisiana and Arkansas is called the "Black Belt." Historically the "Black Belt" area is

the southern part of America that is characterized by poverty, a predominantly large percentage of African Americans, substandard housing, lack of educational resources, poor health care, high unemployment, and a very high crime rate. Generally the majority of people affected by these poor living conditions in the "Black Belt" were African Americans. Over time, the term "Black Belt" referred to the larger area of the South with historic ties to agricultural slave plantations with crops like cotton, rice, tobacco, and sugar. In his 1971 autobiographical work *Up From Slavery*: *An Autobiography*, Booker T. Washington defined the term "Black Belt."

> The term was first used to designate a part of the country which was distinguished by the color of the soil. The part of the country possessing this thick, dark, and naturally rich soil was, of course, the part of the South where the slaves were most profitable, and consequently they were taken there in the largest numbers. Later and especially since the war, the term seems to be used wholly in a political sense—that is, to designate the counties where the Black people outnumber the White (p. 68).

Summer to early fall comprised the revival season in the Black Belt Counties. This was the slack period when the crops were not ready for harvesting. The revivals were religious renewal started by Protestant Churches. This classic form of religious renewal that is carried out in several churches today is still found in Southern rural churches. Lincoln and Mamiya's (1978) study showed that revivals were still held in 542 churches and would normally last from one to two weeks depending on the church. Although most churches had strict rules that forbade women ministers, during revivals some Black churches like the Church of God in Christ and some Baptist churches allowed women to preach. Women were allowed to preach during revivals but they could not be church ministers (Lincoln & Mamiya, 1988).

A search of Historical Census Statistics on population did not provide demographics for churches in counties in the "Black Belt" area; however, demographics were given for large cities in the South where there was a large concentration of Blacks and in reality there would probably be more Black churches. Historical census data for Birmingham, Alabama showed that in 1940, the total population was 267,583 with 158,622 Whites and 108,938 Blacks. In 1950 the population increased to 326,037 with 195,922 Whites and 130,025 Blacks. By 1960 the total population was 340,887 with 205,620 Whites and 135,113 Blacks (U.S. Census Bureau, 2005). There were more Whites than Blacks in Birmingham during the period 1940 to 1960 which would result in a greater resistance to desegregation by Whites.

The trend of more Whites than Blacks is also seen in Montgomery, Alabama, another area with a high concentration of Whites during the civil rights era. In 1940, Montgomery had a total population of 78,084 people. There were 43,547 Whites and 34,535 Blacks. In 1950 the population was 106,525 with 63, 970 Whites and 42, 538 Blacks. By 1960 the population was 134,393 people with 86, 961 Whites and 47,198 Blacks (U.S. Census Bureau, 2005).

Atlanta, Georgia had a larger Black population than Birmingham and Alabama. In 1940, Atlanta's population was 302, 288 with 197,686 Whites and 104,533 Blacks. In 1950 there were 331,314 people with 209,898 Whites and 121,285 Blacks. Atlanta's population increased to 487,455 people in 1960 with 300,635 Whites and 186,484 Blacks (U.S. Census Bureau, 1985). Racial segregation was prevalent in Atlanta.

Although the population in Birmingham, Montgomery, and Atlanta increased significantly, with the White population showing a significantly greater increase than the

Black population, by 1990 there was a decline in the White population in the three cities, compared to the Black population. Between 1980 and 1990, there was a decline in the mass mobilization and direct action that were carried out by civil rights groups in the 1950s to 1960s. In 1990, the Black population in Birmingham was 168,277 and the White population was 95,655. The White population in Montgomery decreased from 106, 792 in 1980 to 105,778 in 1990, while the Black population increased from 69,660 in 1980 to 79,217 in 1990. In Atlanta, the White population decreased to 122,327 in 1990 and the Black population increased to 264, 262 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2005).

What factors led to population change in Birmingham, Montgomery, and Atlanta? To answer this question, this researcher took into consideration the time period, racial laws, race and class structure, and the social and political activities that were taking place in America at the time. Significant job growth and better economic conditions are important in determining an increase in population in urban cities. Blacks moved out of rural areas to find better living conditions in urban cities. Farm work was already on the decline and several Blacks believed that large urban cities offered better job opportunities. Also, Blacks who reached middle class status moved out of cities and were replaced by a larger group of poor immigrants. Another reason for the increase in Black population was Black women of child bearing age were having children. These factors could account for the increase in the Black population in urban areas. There were several reasons for the decrease in the White population. As Blacks moved into urban areas, Whites moved out. Also, a more natural decrease in the White population in urban areas was less adults of childbearing age and more adults of a high mortality risk. More information on population change would require data that followed individual households

over a period of time to investigate and give information on population increase/decrease; unfortunately this data was not available. Because census information did not give demographics about religion and gave limited data on population in rural areas, this researcher relied on reliable research conducted by other researchers for some demographics on rural churches.

Between 1773 and 1775, the first Negro Baptist Church was established in Silver Bluff, South Carolina. The first Negro Baptist Church in Georgia was established in 1779. Other Negro churches were set up in Petersburg, Virginia; Richmond, Virginia; and Pennsylvania (McKinney, 1971). The leaders of these churches were free Negroes. Before and after 1900, Black churches experienced rapid growth. In 1895, when different organizations of the Negro Baptists organized as the National Baptist Convention, the total membership was estimated at 3 million people (McKinney, 1971). There were smaller independent Negro denominations with membership from 4 hundred to 6 hundred thousand people. Most of these churches appealed to people who were economically and educationally least privileged in Black communities (McKinney, 1971). Independent Negro denominations consisted of Baptists, Methodists, and Presbyterians and represented the largest groups. Churches that belonged to the National Baptist Convention represented more than 8 million members. The next largest groups were the African Methodist Episcopal Church and the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church with total membership of almost 2 million people (McKinney, 1971).

The range and age of rural churches in Lincoln and Mamiya's (1978) study ranged from one year to over 200 years old. Lincoln and Mamiya found that the majority of rural Black churches located in the "Black Belt" area were organized in the late 19th

and early 20th centuries. Lincoln and Mamiya (1988) state that in 1978, 619 rural churches in the "Black Belt" area had 105,011 members with an average church membership size of 171. The 1890 census indicates that 9 out of 10 black people lived in the South and more than 80% of them lived in rural areas designated the "Black Belt." By 1980, 85% of the Black population lived in urban areas and about 53% lived in the South (Lincoln & Mamiya, 1988).

Jim Crow Laws

In the 1960s and 1970s many Blacks migrated to escape Jim Crow laws and search for jobs and a better way of life. For those Blacks who remained in the "Black Belt" area, rigid Jim Crow segregation laws added to their suffering.

Jim Crow laws were enacted by Southern states in the early 1880s to legalized segregation between Blacks and Whites. In 1896, the Supreme Court ruled in *Plessy v. Ferguson* that separate facilities for Whites and Blacks were constitutional. This ruling encouraged the passage of segregation laws that put an end to the gains made by Blacks during Reconstruction (Woodward, 1966). The laws required Black and White people to use separate public schools, public libraries, parks, hospitals, public washrooms, restaurants, water fountains, and segregated seats in buses, streetcars, and rail transport. Jim Crow laws also prohibited sexual relations and marriage between Whites and Blacks (Woodward, 1966). In 1950, the Supreme Court ruled that Herman Sweatt, a Black student, must be admitted to the University of Texas Law School because the state did not provide equal education for him. This was later followed by the Supreme Court decision in Brown v. Board of Education in Topeka, Kansas in 1954 that stated that separate facilities by race were unconstitutional (Woodward, 1966). Demonstrations, sit-

ins, lawsuits, and boycotts used for desegregation highlighted the extreme appalling conditions of Blacks living in South, especially in rural areas.

The Role of the Black Church

Due to slavery, followed by inhuman Jim Crow segregation laws, the Black Church became a stable, cohesive, and independent social institution. When Black families were stripped of their strength, Black churches carried the burdens and performed roles and functions beyond religion in economics, education, politics, culture, and music (Frazier, 1974). Black churches were the stabilizing and uplifting institutions for Africans who were brought to America (Jackson and Patterson, 1989). Black churches were involved in abolition, social activism, and economic development. Black churches provided the tools that helped Blacks to be self-sufficient.

The Black church was often the only institution that Blacks were able to turn to for comfort and nurture during segregation. One church that was shaped by Black suffering is the Friendship Baptist Church in Atlanta founded in 1862 with 25 members. Friendship Baptist Church was organized under the leadership of Reverend Frank Quarles. Services were held in a freight boxcar. During 1862 and 1881, the church had an increased membership of 1,570 members (Jackson & Patterson, 1989). In 1870, a worship house was constructed on Hayes and Markam Streets. The church later moved to a new construction on Mitchell Street because the congregation increased.

Friendship Baptist Church played an important and pivotal role in the education of Blacks (Jackson & Patterson, 1989). In 1881 Reverend Randolph Carter became the pastor of Friendship Church and served for 62 years. Under Reverend Carter's leadership,

membership in Friendship increased to 2000 people and a home for the aged was built (Jackson & Patterson, 1989). In 1865, the freight boxcar, Friendship's first church building was used to house Atlanta University. Friendship second church building, which was constructed on Hayes and Markam Streets, became the E.A. Elementary School. Morehouse College held its first classes in the basement of Friendship Baptist Church. Spelman College was also founded in the basement of Friendship (Jackson & Patterson, 1989).

In 1945 Dr. Maynard Holbrook Jackson became pastor of Friendship Baptist Church. After Dr. Jackson's death, Reverend Samuel W. Williams became the pastor. Under Dr. Williams's leadership, the church continued to serve the Black community in economic, social, and political areas. By the 1960s, the church sponsored the construction of 208 low–cost housing units in the Northside Drive neighborhood near the church. In 1970, under the pastorship of Reverend William Vincent Guy, Friendship continued to work for justice and peace for all African Americans (Jackson & Patterson, 1989). Friendship leaders were men; women did not occupy any leadership position as ministers in the church.

In 1866, Clark Chapel was established in Summerville, Georgia. Clark Chapel was recognized as the first Black Methodist Episcopal Church in Atlanta. In 1866, the Methodist Episcopal Church organized the Freedmen Aid Society. This society was organized to assist in the educational and social needs of freed slaves (Jackson & Patterson, 1989). The Freedmen Aid Society established a primary school and a teacher-training college program at Clark Chapel. The Clark Chapel congregation purchased Lloyd Street Church and a merger of the two churches took place. Clark Chapel became

the Lloyd Street Methodist Episcopal Church. In 1901, the name of the of Lloyd Street was changed to Central Avenue and this led to a change in the Church's name to Central Avenue Episcopal Church (Jackson & Patterson, 1989). Several Atlanta leaders served in Central Avenue Episcopal Church. Dr. M.C. Mason was the Corresponding Secretary of the Freedmen Aid Society; Bishop Lorenzo King was the editor of the first Methodist periodical, the Southern Christian Advocate; Ann E. Hall became a missionary to Liberia, sisters Dorothy and Ellen Barnette were missionaries to India and Africa (Jackson & Patterson, 1989). Central Avenue Methodist Church was moved from the Lloyd Street site to Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive. The church became Central Methodist Church (Jackson & Patterson, 1989). Although women served in important roles in the church, they did not hold ministerial positions.

The Ebenezer Baptist Church was founded in 1886. This church played a significant role in the struggle for freedom from racial oppression. The Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. was a minister in the church. Two of Dr. King's family members also served as ministers in Ebenezer Baptist Church: his father, the Reverend Martin Luther King, Sr. and his maternal grandfather Reverend Adam Daniel Williams (Jackson & Patterson, 1989). The first pastor of Ebenezer Baptist Church was Reverend John A. Parker. He served the church from 1886 to 1894. In 1894, Reverend Adam Daniel Williams became the second pastor. In 1931, after the death of Reverend Williams, Reverend Martin Luther King, Sr., became the third pastor. Several changes were made in Ebenezer during Reverend King's tenure. Reverend King started a series of revivals at Ebenezer. He improved the physical facilities and completed renovations on the church sanctuary, purchased a new organ, organized a second choir, reorganized the financial

system, increased membership, and increased programs for children (Jackson & Patterson, 1989). In 1960, the leader of SCLC, Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., became co-pastor of Ebenezer Baptist Church with his father. The two Kings initiated the publication of an annual church report, revised the worship service, and established a monthly Fellowship Hour. It was during Dr. King's tenure as a civil rights leader that Ebenezer Baptist Church gained local and international stature (Jackson & Patterson, 1989). After Dr. King was assassinated Reverend Martin Luther King, Sr. continued as pastor of Ebenezer.

Reverend King was pastor of Ebenezer Baptist Church for forty-five years and retired in 1975 (Jackson & Patterson, 1989). The fourth pastor of Ebenezer Baptist Church was Reverend John Lawrence Roberts. During his tenure as pastor, Reverend Roberts increased membership, started a senior citizen outreach program and a Watch Care program for students. In the Watch Care program, a visiting student from a city outside of Atlanta was assigned a family in Ebenezer that provided a "Home Away From Home." Ebenezer Day Rehabilitation Center provided medical and recreational day care to senior citizens (Jackson & Patterson, 1989). In 1978 Reverend Timothy McDonald became an assistant pastor of Ebenezer. In 1984 Reverend Roberts started a Team Ministry and appointed the Reverend Sharon Genise Austin and the Reverend Edward Spencer Reynolds as part-time assistant pastors. Dr. Austin pastorship was important for women especially in a church where women were not allowed official leadership positions.

As one of the few institutions owned and operated by African Americans, the Black church was the center of activity for the African American communities. The

themes of freedom and deliverance resonated throughout Black churches. Black Christians saw freedom and deliverance as a collective action signifying their deliverance from injustices. Freedom signified a spiritual deliverance into God's kingdom and a deliverance from racial oppression (Pattillo-McCoy, 1998). "Using the call-and-response style, the preacher and the congregation, in musical and verbal cooperation, make the journey toward freedom as one body" (Pattillo-McCoy, 1998). Practices like repeating biblical verses in refrain manner, holding hands, singing, clapping, dancing, and jumping to music are elements of Black Christian rhetoric and ritual. Black Christian rhetoric and ritual were the main ingredients to unifying and rejuvenating a community that was gripped by racial and economic oppression. These are characteristics of revival that is referred to on page 110.

Ella Baker talked about her baptism in her grandfather's church and the role of the church in their community. Her grandfather was the leader of the church. Women participated in church activities and did the work in the church that women were supposed to do. The women were missionaries and they carried out missionary work in the church. Baker was nine years old when she and her brother joined her grandfather's church. Baker (1977) stated:

> "Nine years old. We hadn't quite planned it that particular year, my brother and I hadn't planned it. Our church was over about ten miles from us, and we had to cross a river. In those days there was no bridge across the river. You crossed by flat boat or canoe. And we hadn't gone over to the revival, and we heard that Joseph and Berta—I'll call them my two cousins—had confessed and were therefore going to be baptized in September. We had to do something about it…. We went to church, and I don't know whether we got "religion" the same night or not. We weren't dramatic about it, but we were ready for baptism, and all four of us were baptized at the same time in the old pond mill. That's where you were baptized (p. 24).

Baker' view on religion:

> I took the position that you were supposed to change. And I think the manner in which I manifested was, I was to control my temper. I had a high temper; I was very quick-tempered. And I'd strike back very quickly. I didn't take teasing. I wasn't good at teasing, and I wouldn't take it but so long. I'd say, "Stop," and if it didn't stop I'd hit, and it didn't matter how large you were. And so this was my of demonstrating my change, by trying to control my temper. So we didn't shout; we weren't a shouting family, for the most part. I've seen my aunts and my mother, who were very religious, sitting on the usual front seats, and the tears would roll down. But there was only one aunt who occasionally would do a shouting bit, but my grandfather didn't care too much for noise in the church (p. 25)

Baker talked about the importance of religion in terms of the basis of social action.

Baker (1977) stated:

> It was important for the sense of the value of human being. I looked upon it as having had a family who placed a very high value on people. We were the kind of family that was just not my mother and her brood, but if somebody came by who needed something, you got something; you got food...He had an orchard that was superior to the kind that people have now. There were different kinds of fruits, and the rotation: you'd start off with the early peaches, and then you'd have peaches all through summer up until the fall. He had enough cows to have, say, ten or twelve gallons of milk a day…They raised their own wheat; they ground their own flour and their cornmeal; they had the hogs, and they had plenty of chickens and plenty of eggs. He believed in that kind of living, so going up there every summer, to me it was just like, how did I know he wasn't rich? As far as I was concerned there was plenty to eat. In fact, there was no question; riches never entered into it. It was the business of good living. And nobody ever get turned away…So this was the pattern, and if somebody called and needed help (p. 26).

Many civil rights organizations had church affiliations. The Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) and The Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) had headquarters in Atlanta and grew out of Black churches. SCLC was a church based organization. Several members of SNCC were also affiliated with local churches in their communities. Several secular leaders in other civil rights organizations have backgrounds in the Black Church.

Black suffering has been a common factor that has helped shaped the church. It is only natural that the Black church became a power institution in the United States. Upon hearing about Rosa Parks' refusal to move to the back of the bus and her subsequent arrest, the local Black church ministers along with church members, especially Black women, organized the famous Montgomery Bus Boycott in Alabama. This protest sparked similar protests in other cities in the South. The Black Church along with Black women members organized these protests. In cities where the protests were held, Blacks went to the church nightly to get information and spiritual and moral renewal. In its struggle for civil rights, the Negro Church has challenged discrimination in registration for voting; prevented the political power structure from keeping Blacks out of political involvement and political office; opened schools that were closed to Blacks; assisted in bringing programs into schools that are intended to give Blacks a chance to overcome handicaps in schooling and job opportunities; defeated racist public officers; boycotted businesses that supported segregation; lowered racial barriers in public service, motels, and hotels; and assisted congress in passing laws that would benefit all Americans.

The Role of Black Women in the Black Church

Black women's substantial contributions to religious life merits scholarship, however historians have neglected to trace the role of Black women in religion. Despite Black women's active involvement in the Black Church, historically they were denied positions in religious leadership. Although organizational barriers and structures have placed an "invisible ceiling" on women's opportunities to obtain pastorates or higher leadership positions in the church, in recent years a large majority of women were ordained as women ministers (Lehman, 1985). Historically, race and class structure in the

United States have restricted Black males from leadership positions in prestigious jobs. Due to race and class structure many Black males have turned to the church as a vehicle for social mobility. In the process of doing so, Black men have monopolized leadership positions in the Black Church (Baer, 1993).

Black men monopolization of leadership positions in the Black Church was in part a reflection of male domination of religious leadership and in part a response to racial oppression in American society. The Black Church was mainly the one area where Black men were able to gain social and leadership mobility, therefore, Black men monopolized this area (Baer, 1993). Although many Black churches did not have official policies prohibiting women in leadership roles in the church, they opposed women's leadership. Since the Black male ministers relied on women for regular attendance and general work in the church, women were allowed leadership roles in organizations within the church but they were not allowed to make ministerial decisions that would affect the church as a whole. Women were forced to rely on the male ministers to make the decisions.

Black women played very important roles in the Black Church irrespective of their access to authority, or levels of power (Dodson & Townsend-Gilkes, 1981). Powdermaker (1939) states that although Black men were the leaders in the church, Black women attended church services and revival meetings regularly, they shout and get religion, organized most of the activities in the church, and assumed financial responsibility for the maintenance of these activities. Ella Baker, Bayard Rustin, and Stanley Levison, were the organizers of the church-based Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC), a civil rights organization that was based in Atlanta, Georgia. SCLC

was formed in 1957 and Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., a church minister was the leader. In an interview in 1977, Ella Baker stated that she was one of three persons who had pushed for SCLC. Baker (1977) stated:

> And I don't know how I got involved, but after the Montgomery Bus Boycott and then nothing. And so I perhaps had had the greater experience in terms of the Southern scene. The other two hadn't been involved. So we began to talk in terms of something creating in the South a force that had its leadership base in the top leadership base in the South. And that was why SCLC was pushed. The ministers, as you know, where nothing was happening after the boycott itself and after the successful court action that ended the boycott (p. 61).

Following the settlement of the Montgomery Bus Boycott Case, there had not been many civil rights activities in the South. Baker (1977) explained:

> In fact, there had been none in Montgomery itself. And yet these ministers were there. And so out of whatever conversations, dialogues, and so forth that were taking place, the idea was projected that it would be good to have an organizational base in the South comparable, to some extent, to the NAACP. Because the NAACP was not active in that direction. And these people who had come out of the bus boycott or its leadership ought to be involved in something worth more than just relying on the past. And so out of it, I think that I might have projected the idea that it would be good to have this leadership base…And so it was suggested that really you ought to have something in the South, because that could mean a mass base for action. Hopefully, you would expect it to; of course, you couldn't be sure. And the decision was to have membership, to avoid competition with the NAACP. And out of it came the SCLC (p. 62).

Although Baker was one of the organizers of SCLC, she was not given a leadership position in the organization. In an interview about the church ministers and women's leadership in the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) Ella Baker (1968) stated:

> In the first place, I had known, number one, that there would never be any role for me in a leadership capacity with SCLC. Why? First I'm a woman. Also, I'm not a minister. And second, I am a person that feels that I have to maintain some degree of personal integrity and be my own barometer of what is important and what is not, which meant that

> even if there had been any inclination on the part of the leadership—which I'm sure it would never be—of me being in an important leadership role there, I know that my penchant for speaking honesty about what I considered direction would not be well tolerated.
>
> In the first place, the combination of being a woman and an older woman presented some problems. Number one I was old enough to be the mother of the leadership. The combination of the basic attitude of men and especially ministers as to the role of women in their church setups is that of taking orders, not providing leadership—and the ego that is involved—the ego problems involved in having to feel that here is someone who had the capacity for a certain amount of leadership and, certainly, had more information about a lot of things than they possessed at that time—this would never have lent itself to my being a leader in a movement there (p. 35).

Septima Clark, a civil rights activist, expressed similar sentiments: "I was on the executive staff of the SCLC, but the men on it didn't listen to me too well. They like to send me into many places because I could always make a path in to get people to listen to what I have to say" (Robnett, 1996, p.1671). The comments by Baker and Clark are examples that show that only male ministers occupied formal leadership positions in the civil rights movement.

Black women were not the official leaders in the Black Church, but they were the major sustainers of the church's programs. Black churchwomen were missionaries, church mothers, Sunday school teachers, nurses to church people, deaconesses who taught the church ethos by example, pastors' wives who set examples to other women, officers at women's conferences, church secretaries, leaders in charge of organizations within the church, liaison between the church and the community, and many other roles that women carried out in churches.

African American Women's Leadership

When one looks at the history of the civil rights movement, one would think that the only leaders in the movement were men because the names that quickly come to mind are Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., James Forman, Bayard Rustin, Stanley Levison, E. D. Nixon, Ralph Abernathy, and others. Some academic work showed a large contingent of women participated in the civil rights movement (Carson, 1981; Collier-Thomas & Franklin, 2001; Crawford, Rouse, & Woods, 1993; King, 1987). The names JoAnn Robinson, Septima Clark, Fannie Lou Hamer, Rosa Parks, Ella Baker, Gloria Richardson, Anne Devin, and Victoria Gray belong to the large contingent of women who participated in the civil rights movement. Academic work on these women gives some accounts of the significant roles that they played in the movement. Their activism reflects a unique process of organizing for the purpose of changing social policy at a time when women's activism and their leadership were not recognized. Although they were seldom recognized as leaders, these women were the ones who initiated protest, formulated strategies and tactics, and mobilized other resources that are important for collective action (McNair-Barnett, 1993). The diversity of these women's experiences is matched by the diversity of their backgrounds. Sisters in struggle—sharecroppers, domestic and service workers, schoolteachers, college professors, housewives, beauticians, students, bank and office secretaries—courageously struggled in a society under racial and economic oppression colored by a system of class and sexist rule (McNair-Barnett, 1993). Baker (1974) states, "All of the churches depended, in terms of things taking place, on women, not men. Men didn't do the things that had to be done and you had a large number of women who were involved in the bus boycott. They were the people who

kept the spirit going and the young people (p. 21). The goal here is to recognize that African American women who developed, organized, and sustained the civil rights movement were leaders in their own rights.

The gender bias within the civil rights movement was a reflection of the times. Since women because of gender bias, could not be formal leaders, they became "bridge leaders." In the civil rights movement, in numerous ways, "bridge leaders" provide the link between the movement and the people in the community. Several Black women operated primarily as "bridge leaders" in the civil rights movement. These women made significant contributions by utilizing their local organizations and institutional networks to mobilize oppressed Blacks during Jim Crow. Black female activists went beyond bridging their local communities to the national organizations. By their actions and commitment to fighting racial discrimination and economic oppression, they demonstrated that they are leaders. They had deep abiding concern for the people that they were fighting for. They embraced collectivism and participatory democracy. They were able to distance their own personal ambitions from the struggle and empower people to take charge of their lives. These women were grassroots leaders of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

African American Women Activists in the Civil Rights Movement

Scholars of US history have defined the years from the US Supreme Court's Brown v. Board of Education decision in 1954 to the Selma to Montgomery, Alabama March in 1965 as the Civil Rights Years (Collier-Thomas & Franklin, 2001). The demand for an end to segregation and racial discrimination was the main issue facing

Americans in the civil rights years. Civil rights protests and demonstrations were carried out in several places throughout the United States. Women participated in demonstrations and protests and made several contributions to the civil rights movement.

Several studies of the civil rights movement have examined and focused on organizations like the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC), the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) and the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC). The studies highlighted the activism of the Black male ministers and leaders of these organizations. When women were mentioned in conjunction with NAACP, SCLC, and CORE their presence were understated. The idea that men were the leaders in the civil rights movement is not very accurate. Men's sexist, patriarchal, and authoritarian views about leadership prevented many women from leadership positions, however, women had a much greater influence on the masses (Dallard, 1990; Giddings, 1984; Payne, 1995; Standley, 1990). Because of women's leadership, participation, dedication, and support, the civil rights movement was able to flourish and gain momentum. Women in the civil rights organization worked hard to put an end to Jim Crow practices and they suffered the same physical and economic abuse as the men. Women also risked their lives just like the men. Rather than focus on one particular woman, several women will be discussed to highlight African American women's leadership and the important contributions that these women made in the civil rights movement and the changes that took place in America because of their activism. The women that will be discussed here is just a very small group in the hundreds of known and unknown Black women activists in the United States that helped to mold and shape the direction that the civil rights movement took.

Some of the women who made significant contributions to the movement are Septima Clark, Fannie Lou Hamer, JoAnn Gibson Robinson, Annie Devine, Victoria Gray, and Gloria Richardson.

Black women were much more than followers in the civil rights movement; they were leaders who performed a variety of roles. Black women led by initiating protests, formulating strategies, and mobilizing resources that were important for successful collective action. Many of these women crossed the boundaries between the public life of the civil rights movement and the private life of its constituents and they stayed behind the scenes as "bridge leaders," and sustainers of the civil rights movement. Ella Baker served as a role model to these women. She was dedicated and had ideas about how to organize people and the role of leadership. She did not try to manipulate people. She was someone that people were able to trust. The styles of organizing and leadership that these women displayed were clearly that of Ella Baker.

Septima Clark

Septima Clark started her teaching career on Johns Island, South Carolina in 1916. On Johns Island, Clark saw first hand how poverty, racism, and gender discrimination affected the lives of African Americans. Clark noted that the majority of the Black population on Johns Island was illiterate and children of the Black sharecroppers were only able to attend school during the months of December, January, and February because those months were the "lay period" (Rouse, 2001). Clark set about teaching the adults and children on Johns Island to read and write. She proudly states, "I was down there on Johns Island teaching under many and mounting handicaps. I did have one thing, at least, in my favor, one big thing: I spoke their language. I could

communicate with them" (Clark, 1962, p. 43). As a Black person, Clark was able to relate to the people on Johns Island. She was subjected to Jim Crow Laws and she understood the islanders' needs. Because of her ability to communicate with the people on Johns Island, Clark was able to lead the community to their own empowerment. Not one to limit her work to only teaching, Clark sewed clothes for the children, nursed the sick, and gave help wherever it was needed. After spending three years on Johns Island, Clark returned to a teaching career in Charleston, South Carolina in 1919. On her return to Charleston, Clark joined the NAACP to help secure civil and political rights for Black Americans. After participating in a successful protest with the NAACP to free a Black delivery boy who was wrongfully arrested, Clark became involved in political activism and was inspired to improve Black children's condition in Charleston. Clark worked with the Young Women Christian Association (YWCA) in Charleston and was instrumental in getting recreational facilities for African American youths. While teaching in Booker T. Washington School, Clark assisted in the development of a lawsuit for the equalization of salaries for Black and White teachers, and in 1945, Federal District Judge J. Waties Waring ruled for the equalization of salaries for Black and White teachers (McFadden, 1990).

In 1954, Clark became involved in the Highlander School project. At Highlander, Blacks and Whites worked together to end racial segregation. Through Highlander, Clark became involved in the Citizenship School Program on Johns Island in 1956. Rouse (2001) states, "this laid the foundation for the modern civil rights movement; and the termination of Clark's employment with the public school system of Charleston" (p. 106). Southern states officials viewed the NAACP as being linked to the Communist

Party and passed legislation that all public employees were required to state if they were members in the NAACP. Employees who were members of the NAACP were fired (Rouse, 2001). This action on the part of Southern states officials proved that they were trying to curtail the activism of African Americans. In 1957, the first Citizenship School was opened on Johns Island to assist citizens to meet the literacy requirements for voting in South Carolina (Rouse, 2001). The school was successful in meeting its goal because the first group of students learned to read and write their own names and do arithmetic (Rouse, 2001). Following this success, schools were opened on Wadmalaw Island, Edisto Island, and North Charleston. As Director of Workshop for Highlander, Clark traveled throughout the United States speaking and seeking support for the school's program of social reform. Clark hired teachers for the Citizenship Schools from Negro women in the local communities where the schools were located. Ella Baker was very enthusiastic about this because of her belief in women as human resources and grassroots leadership (Branch, 1988).

In 1959, following a raid on Highlander and the arrest of Septima Clark, Ella Baker introduced Martin Luther King, Jr. to the idea of moving the Citizenship Program to the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC). In 1961, after the Highlander School was closed, Clark moved to SCLC in Atlanta. SCLC placed the Citizenship School Program under the supervision of Andrew Young, SCLC Field Foundation supervisor. Clark was in charge of the citizenship program and voter registration, and she replicated the Highlander School program by focusing on citizenship training, voting, and literacy.

Between 1961 and 1970, there were 897 SCLC Citizenship Schools (Rouse, 2001). The schools were held in private homes, beauty parlors, barbershops, and wherever was necessary to hold school. Clark endorsed Andrew Young's statement that "the Citizenship Schools were the base on which the whole Civil Rights Movement was built" (Rouse, 2001, p. 114).

Fannie Lou Hamer

It is within the closed society of Mississippi that Fannie Lou Hamer's activism was born. Hamer was born in 1917 and was the youngest of twenty children. She saw her parents struggle in a system that was designed to keep every Black person down and it was because of this system and Blacks' long suffering in Mississippi's racist and rural poverty that Hamer developed a great concern for the plight of poor Blacks, especially women. Hamer and her family lived on a Sunflower County Plantation where she worked as a sharecropper and timekeeper (Locke, 1993). In 1962, Hamer attended a meeting where SNCC and SCLC members spoke to local residents about the importance of voting. Hamer volunteered with other Blacks to go to the county courthouse in Indianola to try and register to vote. Hamer did not pass the literacy test that was needed for registration to vote. After that first registration attempt, Hamer was fired from her job as a timekeeper and ordered off the plantation where she had worked for more than eighteen years (Crawford, 2001). Hamer returned to the courthouse repeatedly until she was registered to vote on January 10, 1963 (Lee, 2001).

From her first attempt to register to vote, Hamer committed herself to fight racial oppression. "Hamer moved beyond resistance as everyday, individual acts of survival" (Lee, 2001, p.143). This commitment led to several attacks on Hamer's life. However,

instead of being afraid, Hamer resisted every effort made to silence her through her commitment to fighting Jim Crow. Hamer began promoting collective struggles as a way to fight oppression. She challenged the political boundaries of Jim Crow by working as a field secretary for SNCC with voter registration, the development of welfare programs, and the circulation of petitions to secure federal assistance for poor Blacks (Locke, 1993). Hamer tapped into her community's need by encouraging Blacks to register to vote.

In June 1963, as she was returning from a voter registration workshop in South Carolina, Hamer and seven other activists were arrested in Winona, Mississippi. They were brutally beaten in the county jail (Lee, 2001). The beating left Hamer with permanent injuries: "she lost sight in her left eye, and she suffered irreparable damage to her kidneys. What is more, the beating also exacerbated a limp that had plagued Hamer since a childhood bout with polio" (Lee, 2001, p. 152). Although this was a very painful incident, Hamer continued her activism by encouraging voter registration, assisting in a food and clothing drive, and running for political office. She assisted in anything that needed to be done to dismantle Jim Crow (Lee, 2001).

Hamer played a major role in the establishment of the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party (MFDP) in 1964 "Freedom Summer." The MFDP was organized to show Americans the principles of the state Democratic Party that excluded all Blacks from voting. The MFDP was trying to replace the state Democratic Party with a system based on participatory democracy (Locke, 1993). At the convention, Hamer spoke about violence against Blacks, the murder of Black men, and the beatings that she and other activists received in Winona. The MFDP lost its challenge, but did not accept the

compromise developed by Walter Mondale and Hubert Humphrey (Locke, 1993). Under the leadership of Hamer, the MFDP with little national support continued its fight against the state Democratic Party.

The work of Fannie Lou Hamer is an example of how America was brought one step closer to dismantling racial and economic oppression. Hamer did not have a formal education, but she had a fighting spirit and a great love for humankind that gave her the strength to challenge an American oppressive system. She did so because she was determined to make America a place that Black people can live in and have a normal life. "Hamer became a symbol of the struggle for survival in a racist, hostile environment" (Locke, 1993, p. 35). Hamer was also a good example of a grassroots leader.

JoAnn Robinson

JoAnn Robinson was a college teacher at Alabama State University in Montgomery. She chaired the Women's Political Council in Montgomery, an organization of professional women that organized voter registration and raised the status of Blacks by working with juvenile and adult delinquents. Robinson also worked on the Executive Board of Montgomery Improvement Association (Standley, 1993). On the night that Rosa Parks was arrested, Robinson met with members of the Women Political Council and informed them of Parks' arrest. The council made a decision to boycott the buses on the day of Parks' trail, Monday, December 5, 1955. Robinson and council members mimeograph protest leaflets, which were distributed the next morning by Robinson and some of her college students to students in local Black elementary and high schools, and people in Black businesses (Parks, 2001; Weisbrot, 1991). This is what the handbill said:

> This is for Monday, December 5, 1955.
> Another Negro woman has been arrested and thrown into jail because she refused to get up out of her seat on the bus and give it to a White person.
>
> It is the second time since the Claudette Colvin case that a Negro woman has been arrested for the same thing. This has to be stopped.
>
> Negroes have rights, too, for if Negroes did not ride the buses, they could not operate. Three-fourths of the riders are Negroes, yet we are arrested, or have to stand over empty seats. If we do not do something to stop these arrests, they will continue. The next time it may be you, or your daughter, or mother.
>
> This woman's case will come up on Monday. We are, therefore, asking every Negro to stay off the buses Monday in protest of the arrest and the trial. Don't ride the buses to work, to town, to school, or anywhere on Monday.
>
> You can afford to stay out of school for one day. If you work, take a cab, or walk. But please, children and grown-ups don't ride the bus at all on Monday. Please stay off all buses Monday (Parks, 2001, p. 65).

The boycott gained momentum and drew the attention of Americans outside of Montgomery. On Monday, December 5, 1955 and throughout the summer of 1956, Black people continued to stay off the buses. This action culminated in several arrests and lawsuits. Finally, on December 20, 1956, a written order form the US Supreme Court stated that segregation on Montgomery buses was unconstitutional. Black people went back on the buses on December 21, 1956. The Montgomery Bus Boycott covered a period of one year and fifteen days. Because JoAnn Robinson's leadership, activism, intelligence, bravery, and willingness to fight Jim Crow, Montgomery's Black population supported Rosa Parks and boycotted Montgomery buses.

Annie Devine

Anne Devine was college educated and taught elementary school for a short time in Flora, Mississippi. In the 1960s she worked as a debit manager for a Black-owned Security Life Insurance Company in Canton Mississippi. Devine was a committed church

member with a great deal of influence in her community. She was also committed to improving the lives of Black people. In 1961, Devine joined the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) and became a stabilizing force to the young activists who came to Canton. Devine brought to CORE the experiences and skills that she had gained from working in the insurance industry. From her work in insurance, she traveled alone throughout the country and she worked effectively with people, both of which were important in mass mobilization (Crawford, 1993).

In Canton, Devine visited homes and spoke with people about CORE's goals. She also delivered leaflets and explained CORE's policy to poor, uneducated Blacks in the community. Although she did not participate in marches and sit-ins, she was a strategist and policy maker in CORE. Annie Devine along with Fannie Lou Hamer, and Victoria Gray were elected state representative for the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party (MFDP) (Crawford, 1993).

Victoria Gray

Victoria Gray, a businesswoman, grew up in Hattiesburg Mississippi. Grandparents who were successful farmers and landowners raised Gray. They instilled in Gray their own sense of independence and self-sufficiency (Crawford, 2001). Gray attended Wilberforce University in Ohio and taught school for a short time. In 1955, Gray opened a shop and sold beauty products with a staff of over twenty-five agents. Gray became a very successful businesswoman.

In 1961, when SNCC staff members went to Hattiesburg, Gray was instrumental in getting the minister of St. John Methodist Church to allow the activists to use the church for meetings. Gray became a member of SNCC and worked with voter

registration. Gray attended a citizenship workshop given by SCLC's Septima Clark and returned to Hattiesburg where she started citizenship education (Crawford, 2001). Gray continued working with the civil rights movement in whatever capacity she could help. She worked with SCLC, CORE, SNCC, the Delta Ministry, and MFDP. Crawford (2001) states that Gray was one of those people who had the ability to rise above the rifts in organizations that separate one organization from another.

Gloria Richardson

In the 1960s, 30 percent of the Black population in Cambridge, Maryland was chronically unemployed and another 30 percent was seasonally unemployed. Also two-thirds of Black families made less than $3,000 a year (Harley, 2001). Cambridge had an established pattern of racial discrimination and segregation (Brock, 1993). Many Blacks and Whites lived in houses that were built to raise chickens. Blacks also lived in segregated communities, worked in segregated jobs, attended segregated schools, and sat in segregated seats in theaters (Harley, 2001). This was the racial climate in Cambridge, Maryland in the 1960s even though officials claimed that Cambridge schools were desegregated in accordance with the desegregation decision handed down in 1954 by the United States Supreme Court (Harley, 2001). This was the community that Gloria Richardson knew.

Gloria Richardson was born in 1922 in an educated middle-class Cambridge family. Although her grandfather was an elected member of the Cambridge City Council for thirty years, this did not protect the family from segregation practices and racial oppression in Cambridge (Harley, 2001). Richardson spoke about her background. She recalls: "Regardless of my background, I experienced the same kinds of things all other

Blacks did in Cambridge" (Harley, 2001, p. 181). Following Richardson's graduation from the Howard University in 1941, she worked briefly for the federal government and then returned to Cambridge to be closer to, family. As the manager of a pharmacy in Cambridge, Richardson came in contact with her clients who were mainly working-class Black families and this helped define the nature of her leadership (Harley, 2001).

In 1962, the Cambridge Nonviolent Action Committee (CNAC) was formed. This was a local affiliate of SNCC. In June 1962, Richardson became the co-chair of CNAC (Brock, 1983). Richardson was also the most visible member in the CNAC. From 1962 to 1964, Richardson and other CNAC members regularly had sit-ins in public places, marched in the streets, picketed businesses, wrote letters to newspapers, and sometimes responded to violent attacks with violence (Harley, 2001). Richardson had seen the ineffectiveness of her grandfather's gradualist approach to politics in the local city council and she had an understanding of how racial oppression worked in Cambridge. This knowledge led Richardson to a more aggressive approach in dealing with segregation to bring about social change in Cambridge (Harley, 2001).

The sixties were a very turbulent period for Blacks and Whites in Cambridge. Richardson identified the needs of Blacks beyond desegregation as she began to look toward attaining economic justice in housing, education, job opportunity, and health care (Foeman, 1966). Richardson and CNAC made several demands on city officials to improve conditions for Blacks in the areas of employment, housing, and health. CNAC also worked on voter registration and recreational activities for Blacks. Richardson and CNAC continued with mass demonstrations and sit-ins to desegregate public facilities in Cambridge. In June 1963, segregationist in Cambridge attempted to block the application

of the Public Accommodation Law. The law barred discrimination against Blacks and other minority groups. Failure to stop the block led to an escalation in violence between Blacks and Whites and several activists including young students were arrested (Brock, 1993). With tensions mounting, sit-ins, violence, and demonstrations continued in Cambridge. Incidents ranged from an egg crushed on the head of a protestor by the owner of a segregated restaurant to random shootings from behind cars, windows, and the roofs of houses (Foeman, 1996). President Kennedy described Cambridge as a town that had "lost sight of what demonstrations are about because of violence" (Brock, 1993, p 134). Richardson wrote a letter protesting Kennedy's remarks, and at a rally she claimed,

> "Unless something is achieved soon in Cambridge, then no one is going to be able to control these people who have been provoked by generations of segregation, by countless indignities—and now by uncontrollable White mobs in the streets…Instead of progress we have anarchy. The White men who have power…sit in their comfortable houses, undisturbed by events until it is too late (Brock, 1990, p. 135).

Weeks later Richardson agreed to a compromise. It was believed that Richardson agreed to this compromise to avoid more violence that would escalate in bloodshed (Brock, 1990). Soon after the compromise, Richardson used her influence to encourage Black citizens to boycott a referendum that would integrate public accommodation. Richardson's view was that Blacks already had the constitutional rights and they should not have to vote. Both Black radicals and White reactionaries assisted in defeating this referendum. Cambridge's NAACP broke company with Richardson over this issue and Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. questioned Richardson on her political stance (Brook, 1993; Foeman, 1996). This was soon followed by infrequent demonstrations in Cambridge with very few successes. By 1964, Richardson made the decision to leave Cambridge with her new husband.

The names and accomplishment of women like Clark, Hamer, Robinson, Devine, Gray, and Richardson have not reached the ears of many of America's school children. Yet the examples these women have set as leaders and the contributions they have made are real for us to know and discover. These women's contributions tell us that women in small towns all over America have a voice if America is willing to hear.

As bridge leaders, Black women mobilized the masses to fight for freedom from oppression. Ella Baker was fed up with the lack of support from men in the major civil rights organizations, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored people (NAACP) and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC). She assisted in the development of a student movement, the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC). She successfully created a bridge between the students of the North and South. The students were connected to each other and were able to coordinate their efforts thorough SNCC. The students developed the type of leadership that Baker wanted to see in the NAACP and SCLC; a leadership that reached out to the masses throughout the South.

Summary

Black women's leadership gets its legitimacy from symmetrical relationships among movement members. The members engaged in collective action at the grassroots level and they were the facilitators that guided movement group members. This collectivity among group members protected the movement from having one person as the "leader" which is normal in bureaucratic organizations with traditional leadership models. In contrast to Black male leadership and organizations with traditional

leadership, Black women emphasized community work as the preferred form of leadership in the 1950s and 1960s. This form of leadership manifested itself through door-to-door campaigns to initiate protests, formulated strategies and tactics, and mobilized people and resources for collective action to bring social change to American society. Black women's leadership brought women of diverse backgrounds together to empower each other and collectively fight racial discrimination and economic oppression.

In chapter one Gardner (1995) states that leaders convey their stories by the kinds of lives that they lead and through example, seek to inspire others to follow. By studying women's leadership in the civil rights movement, we call attention to activists' stories, not only in relation to the past, but also in relation to the future. These women's lives serve as examples to all women to continue the struggle to eliminate racial discrimination. The civil rights movement was a social and political struggle that was intensely documented. By focusing on the lives of activists and the meaning of the civil rights movement, we are encouraged to consider the leadership of women like Ella Baker, Septima Clark, Fannie Low Hamer and others to reveal their roles in the movement and to allow the movement to involve us in the evolving present. The Black Women's Coalition of Atlanta included this stanza in its poem of tribute:

> Through knowing our Sisters
> Our history comes clearer,
> Our cause stays in focus,
> The legacy grows dearer
>
> (Nasstrom, 1999, p.135)

CHAPTER SIX – BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

Introduction

Roots

I woke up this morning with my mind

stayed on freedom,

I woke up this morning with my mind

stayed on freedom,

I woke up this morning with my mind

stayed on freedom,

Hallelu, Hallelu, Hallelu, Hallelu, Hallelujah!

Traditional hymn sung as a civil rights song in the sixties (Cantarow, O'Malley, & Hartman- Strom, 1980).

Ella Baker's leadership theory had its origin in her childhood family and community experiences. Baker's outlook on life was to a great extent influenced by family members and the messages of the Southern Baptist religious faith. Family, community, and religious messages shaped Baker's worldview, gave her a sense of self-confidence, and a dedication to social activism (Petty, 1996). The messages from family, community, and religion framed Baker's belief in the potential of individuals and the value of community. These practical experiences and clear philosophical framework led Baker to shape, articulate, and practice her distinctive leadership theory (Petty, 1996).

Family and Community Influences

Ella Baker has often credited her family and childhood community with shaping her political outlook. Early in her life, Baker knew that her family was better off materially than their neighbors and with this knowledge came the responsibility of helping those who were less fortunate. Baker's most vivid childhood memory was the mutual cooperation and self-help that permeated her whole community (Ransby, 1994). "Cooperative farming practices built a strong sense of interdependency and group solidarity" (Ransby, 1994, p. 288). Baker saw how her family pooled their resources with others to fend off hard times. Her grandfather mortgaged his farm twice to buy food to feed families in their community (Ransby, 2004). Family and community, education at Shaw University, and experiences in Harlem in the early 1920s and 30s influenced Baker's overall personality development to a great extent. Baker's great sense of responsibility was based on family traditions in Littleton, North Carolina and her sense of community and responsibility expanded after she left Shaw University in 1927 (Mueller, 1993).

Childhood

Baker's family, childhood experiences in Norfolk, Virginia and Littleton, North Carolina; her experiences at Shaw University in Raleigh, North Carolina; and her experiences in Harlem contributed to Baker's identity as a woman, intellectual, and activist and set the stage for more than fifty years of political and social activism (Ransby, 2003). Baker was born on December 13, 1903 in Norfolk, Virginia. She was the second of three children. Baker's family came out of slavery. Both her maternal and

paternal grandparents were slaves. Her family was made up of strong, religious, hardworking women and men. Family members were grandmother, Betsy Ross, mother Georgianna (Anna) Baker, aunts Lizzie and Carrie Ross. The men were her father Blake Baker, grandfather Mitchell Ross, and Uncle Alpheus (Grant, 1988).

Baker's early years had a profound influence on her leadership and political development. Her grandparents, Mitchell and Betsy Ross had been slaves. She grew up listening to their stories about the struggles and suffering of Black slaves; the degradation and brutality of enslavement; and the resistance and triumphs of slaves. A story that Baker was very interested in was the one about her grandmother Betsy Ross. Betsy's mistress wanted Betsy to marry a light skinned man. Betsy refused to do so. Although Betsy's mistress wanted Betsy whipped, the master refused to do so because Betsy was his daughter. Instead, Betsy was banished to the fields (Baker, 1977). For Baker, her grandmother's behavior was one of rebellion, "particularly because it delineated the color lines" (Grant, 1998, p. 9). Ransby (2003) states, "What was instilled in young Ella by the family's storytelling tradition was not only that she was the descendent of slaves; but that she came from a line of militant fighters" (p. 23). Grant (1998) states, "she came out of a family that rebelled against the status quo, and she carried out the family tradition" (p. 2). Baker's family had a great influence on her political development. Payne (1989) said that Baker remembered the world of her childhood as a kind of "family socialism," a world in which food and tools and homes were shared, where informal adoption of children was taken for granted, a world with a minimal sense of hierarchy. In Virginia, Baker and her family lived a prosperous life, having milk, eggs, and fruit which they shared with whoever was in need (Grant, 1998). Baker saw the sharing and caring that took place in

her home and neighborhood. She was deeply moved by this experience. Baker was proud that she came from a family who placed a very high value on people:

> We were the kind of family that was not just my mother and her brood, but if somebody came by who needed something, you got something; you got food. One of the things my grandfather had was a large production of food, and there was plenty of food….so if you came there was plenty to eat….As far as I was concerned, there was plenty to eat. In fact there was no question of riches; riches never entered into it…And nobody ever got turned away (Baker, 1977, p. 26).

Baker's family fed both Black and White people who were in need (Grant, 1998). This sharing and caring did not stop with food only. It extended to other areas in people's lives. Anna Baker (Baker's mother) ministered and responded to calls to help the sick. Baker's childhood influenced her philosophy about economic development and social equality within the African American community.

Grandpa Mitchell Ross had a profound influence on Baker. Grandpa Ross was a hard working farmer, minister, and a recognized community leader. After emancipation, Grandpa Ross saved enough money to purchase 250 acres of the plantation in Elms, Warren County where he was a slave. Baker (1968) stated:

> I came out of a family background that involved itself with people. One of the stories that dominates our family literature was the fact that my maternal grandfather contracted for—I don't know under what terms—but, for a large section of the old slave plantation. He established himself—sisters and brother, cousins, etc. on fifty-and sixty-acre plots. Out of it came sort of a community which is still obtaining, to some extent (p. 2).

This was an independent community; they were independent farmers. They went in for the practice of cooperatives, that is, helping out each other (Baker, 1977). It was in this extended family setting that Baker learned the values that she would carry with her throughout her life: "a sense of community and a deep-felt recognition of the importance of sharing" (Grant, 1998, p. 12). Grandpa Ross was particularly fond of Baker and called

her “Grand Lady “ (Baker, 1977). Grandpa Ross and Baker spent many hours in conversation. Baker (1968) said that her grandfather was a minister, “but he was a very usual minister, especially for that period. He was the teacher-type to the extent that if the people would begin to shout in his church, he would call them by name and say, ‘sit down. Nothing but the devil makes you make so much noise’” (p. 2). As a minister he visited parish members and Baker was allowed to go with him. On these trips he told her stories about slavery. The special relationship between Baker and her grandfather was often seen during church services, Grandpa Ross sometimes allowed Baker to sit in the pulpit chair that was designated for visiting ministers (Baker, 1977). Baker and her grandfather adored each other and Baker was heart broken when he died.

Baker grew up in a family that was deeply religious. Black Southern Baptist religion was a major force in the Baker family household (Ransby, 2003). Religion was also very important to Baker. Baker at age seventy-five said, “I was young when I became active in things and I became active in things largely because my mother was very active in the field of religion” (Ransby, 2003, p. 16). Baker explained, “In an environment where aggressive leadership existed largely in the church, I responded to the church” (Grant, 1998, p. 18). Anna Ross Baker was a very influential woman in Baker’s life. Baker often described her mother as a stern woman who believed in discipline as much as she believed in God. “My mother was a very positive and sort of aggressive woman” (Ransby, 2003, p. 15).

Baker was nurtured by a group of hardworking religious women in Littleton. Baker lived in a community with Christian women who worked very hard to uplift their families and communities. The women in Baker’s community were active in the

missionary. These women took their children to meetings of the missionary group and young Ella frequently addressed the group at these meetings (Grant, 1988). Baker had an active life in the church. At the age of seven, she had become a leader of the Sunshine Club, a church sponsored missionary adjunct. By ten years old Baker had read the Bible two or three times (Grant, 1998). Anna Baker's strong and deep belief in God convinced her that faith must be translated into good deeds and she encouraged the women in her Baptist church to "let Christ take the first place in your vocation and life. Inquire of the Lord what he would have us do. Let us stay on the job for Christ" (Ransby, 2003, p. 16). Baker (1977) remembered one of her mother's good deeds.

> On many a night after we moved from Norfolk, the three children and my mother, people would knock on the door in the middle of the night and say, "Mrs. Baker, So-and-so is sick." And my mother had one of those very positive voices. They'd knock and she said, "Ye-e-es? She would get up… (p.27).

Religion was part of the culture that Baker grew up in. Baker saw how religious principles and Christian charity were applied in the real world (Ransby, 2003). The missionary association sponsored an orphanage, aided the sick and elderly, funded scholarships for Black students, and provided aid to the local church schools (Ransby, 2003). Baker also saw missionary work carried out by confident, competent, committed Black women. These women conducted their own meetings, managed their own finances, and made policy decisions (Ransby, 2003). Many women brought their daughters into these activities. It was here that Ella Baker had first hand experiences in collective activism. These women's collective strengths and activism had a profound effect on Ella Baker the child. Ransby (2003) states:

> Anna Ross Baker and her sisters in the church preached and practiced an activist, women-centered faith, which was similar to the Social Gospel

> doctrine being espoused by White Protestant denominations around the same time. Although they were predominately middle class and imbued with a materialist, missionary objective to "Christianize" their less fortunate brethren and sister, these devout Black Baptist women were more than elitist charity workers. Through home visits and reading groups called "Bible bands," they forged personal, cross-class relationships with the poor and illiterate members of their communities. They did not confine their work to prayerful study and community service; they extended their mission to secular affairs, advocating anti-lynching legislation, crusading for temperance, and challenging segregation. This was an activist religion that urged women to act as positive agents for change in the world (p. 17).

Anna and the women in the missionary movement rejected the stereotyped images that women are fragile, passive, and concerned only with home, family, fashion, and gossip. Anna Baker was an activist with a woman-centered philosophy and she instilled in her two daughters "the desire to mold themselves in the images of strong, intelligent, and socially engaged Black women" (Ransby, 2003, p. 18). Anna Baker and the women in the Black Baptist church in Littleton, North Carolina helped people irrespective of their status and this was the concept that Ella Baker accepted, internalized, and carried with her for the rest of her life (Ransby, 2003). "These female role models undoubtedly influenced Ella's sense of confidence in herself as a woman and her sense of her potential as a leader" (Ransby, 1994, p. 289).

Education was central to Baker's early years. Her mother insisted on Baker and her siblings getting a proper education. In 1910, when Baker was seven years old, her family moved from Norfolk, Virginia to Littleton, North Carolina because Anna wanted to help her mother Betsy Ross and give her children a rich cultural experience and the best education (Ransby, 2003). This was not the only reason for moving to Littleton. Baker's father worked on a ship and did not come home regularly. Anna Baker was left to raise the children in Norfolk. This was not an unusual situation as good paying jobs for

Black men were scarce and the work on the ship paid well. Also, the move to Littleton allowed Anna Baker to get help with the children from the extended family, especially when she was sick with bronchial trouble. Anna encouraged the education of her children. She was a trained teacher and she taught her children grammar, writing, and speech before they entered school (Baker, 1977). It was Anna who made sure that Baker got an education. Education, the proper use of English, and oratorical skills were very important to Anna Baker (Baker, 1977). As a result of Baker's mother insistence on a good education, Baker became an eloquent orator and a formidable debater.

Shaw University

In the early 1900s education was limited to Blacks after Grammar school. In the fall of 1918, Baker's mother sent her to Shaw University in Raleigh, North Carolina. This was a Baptist boarding school and university that was established by the Northern Baptists. Shaw was one of the oldest schools for Blacks. The northerners who fought in the Civil War established the school for Blacks. At one time Shaw had professional schools like medicine, dentistry, pharmacy, and law. By the time Baker went to Shaw, the schools did not function (Baker, 1977). Baker went to Shaw at age fourteen and remained there until she graduated in 1927. Most of the students at Shaw were boarding students. Several students from the Black community in the City attended school at Shaw (Baker, 1977). Two colleges were located at Shaw, the Northern Baptist, which was Shaw University, and the Episcopalian, which was St. Augustine. The city students were divided according to their denominations When Baker attended Shaw University; there was a mixed faculty. The president and some of the teachers were White and the other teachers were Black (Baker, 1977).

As Baker worked her way through school, Shaw opened up a new world for her. It was the first Black college to enroll women in its program. It was at Shaw that Baker's political interest was aroused as she saw the contradictions between what the authorities said and what they did (Grant, 2001). Baker said that she did not break the rules, but she challenged them. Baker recalled an incident at Shaw University that many students resented. "When Northern Whites would come, they'd want you to sing spirituals…. I had a strong voice, and I recall them asking me if I'd lead something…. But I said, "No, Mr. President" (Baker, 1977, p. 31).

Although Shaw's administrators emphasized humility and Christian service, they reinforced many elitist assumptions about social class (Ransby, 2003). Baker did not need to learn the value of community service and humility because her family had already emphasized these values throughout her childhood (Ransby, 2003).

In college, Baker was articulate and took up the causes of students who were wrongly accused. She challenged the teachers and administrators. Ransby (2003) states that those college years "marked the beginning of Baker's self-identification as a rebel and her lifelong work as a political organizer" (p. 47). Baker's college experiences led her to think politically. Baker completed high school and college at Shaw and was Valedictorian of her class. In 1927, after her graduation from Shaw with a B.A., she moved to Harlem, New York.

Early Social and Political Activism

Harlem

When Ella Baker migrated to Harlem she was exposed to a community with political debate and cultural development. Ransby (2003) states, "What emerged in the African American capital of Harlem during the decades following World War I was a discourse and practice based on the politics and vision of fundamental social transformation, that is, a semi-autonomous black left" (p. 66). Baker became part of this community with residents who relocated from Southern United States, as well as the Caribbean and Africa. The movers and shakers of this Harlem community were foreign born Blacks like W. A. Domingo, Claudia Jones, Cyril Briggs, Otto Huiswood, Grace Campbell, Richard Moore, and Marcus Garvey. These were the key people involved in Harlem's political life in the 1920s and 1930s (Ransby, 2003).

When Baker arrived in Harlem, the Great Depression of the 1920s had worsened the conditions for Blacks living in Harlem. The poor economic conditions affected Baker financially as well as influenced her politics. Baker came to the realization that the American Dream that college educated Blacks had dreamt of was shattered when she had to compete with others for low-paying menial jobs (Ransby, 2003). Black pride and the economic suffering caused by the Great Depression of 1929 resulted in protest activities that culminated in the famous 1935 Harlem riot (Ransby, 2003). Baker's intellectual curiosity and passion for politics were fueled by her interest in socialism and Marxist theory. It was out of that context that Baker began more exploration in the area of ideology and theory regarding social change (Baker, 1968). She attended lectures and discussions on the two topics at the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture and

the Harlem Branch YMCA. At the Harlem Branch Library, Baker created the first Negro History Club. The club members met for discussions on history and events that were important to Blacks in the Harlem Community (Ransby, 2003).

With George Schuyler, Ella Baker formed the Young Negroes Cooperative League (YNCL) in 1931. Baker said that George Schuler was the voice of social action that many young people responded to because he was constantly advocating that the only way for Blacks to pull themselves out of the depression was through cooperative efforts like cooperative buying clubs and credit unions (Baker, 1968). Baker became the national director of YNCL in 1932. The national director's job involved organizing the YNCL. The purpose of YNCL was to gain economic power through consumer cooperation. The YNCL was made up of affiliate councils that were organized into buying clubs, cooperative groceries, and cooperative distribution centers (Ransby, 1994). The YNCL encouraged and guided African Americans to strengthen their buying power through cooperatives that could save them money by purchasing wholesale goods (Waldschmidt-Nelson, 2001). The YNCL was a nonbureaucratic organization that also encouraged the participation of women, the importance of grassroots involvement, and shared decision-making by all its members. Ransby (1994) states that the organizational philosophy of YNCL foreshadowed another youth organization (SNCC) that Baker became closely associated with in the 1960s.

In the mid 1930s, Baker worked with the Worker's Education Project of the Works Progress Administration (WPA) as a teacher and coordinator of the consumer education project in Harlem. The Works Progress Administration was set up under Franklin Delano Roosevelt to help solve the unemployment problem during the

Depression (Cantarow, O'Malley, & Hartman-Strom 1980). It was at WPA that Baker became associated with the Lovestonites who ran the New Workers School where radical and political debates were held (Ransby, 1994). There were discussions on various issues at the Workers Education because people were in the Communist Party, Socialist Democratic, and various factions (Joanne Grant's undated interview with Baker). Baker said:

> I was a liberal….The Workers Education Program wasn't designed to be political, but in the nature of the composition of quote "the majority" of the people on it: in the first place, both White and Negro who were not inclined that way sought employment somewhere else. But those who had had some experience or were inclined then they would naturally drift in that direction. It was a period of high political expectancy too (Baker's undated interview with Joanne Grant).

The Lovestonites was a socialist group that was run by Jay Lovestone. Although there is no record that Baker joined the group, the political and intellectual debate in this group would appeal to Baker (Ransby, 1994). Baker stayed with the WPA until it folded. She said the "the period ended" (Baker's undated interview with Grant). Baker did not say why the WPA folded and information on why the WPA ended was not available.

In 1931, Baker attended Brookwood Labor College for one semester on a scholarship. At Brookwood, she learned about the history of working people, and theories and models of social change. Baker was introduced to an open democratic approach to formal education. Ransby (2003) states that Baker "saw enormous transformative potential in democratic and nontraditional learning environments like Brookwood. She took ideas, theoretical paradigms, and philosophies seriously, and she spent much of her adult life mastering ways of how to pass that knowledge on to others and empower them in the process" (p. 74).

Baker joined the Library Adult Education Committee in 1933. The committee sponsored lectures, forums, and debates on a wide range of topics (Ransby, 2003). Baker saw education as the main tool in the struggle against oppression. In 1934, Baker created an educational and consciousness-raising program for Harlem's youth and teenagers. This organization was aptly named the Young People Forum (YPF).

In Harlem, Baker met several intellectual young women. She met women like Pauli Murray who later became a civil rights lawyer, feminist poet, and religious leader; Dorothy Height who became the head of the National Council of Negro Women; Anna Arnold Hedgeman, who was the membership secretary of Harlem YMCA, and Viola Lewis Waiters and Margaret Douglass who were political activists (Ransby, 2003). These women formed a strong bond and rose above the limitations of race and sex. They also assisted younger African American women to do the same. Ransby (2003) states that these women shared a sisterhood that foreshadowed the revival of the feminist movement in the 1960s and were engaged in many issues that were important to Blacks. This group of women and the Harlem community politically awakened Baker. She formed comradeship with Pauli Murray and other women activists who nurtured her politically. Ransby (2003) states, "her development as a radical intellectual took place through a systematic educational process that went on both inside and outside cultural institutions" (p. 72). Harlem provided stimulating discussions, political debates, and an exchange of cultural ideas. In the 1920s and 1930s Harlem became the place for testing political ideologies and intellectual inquiries and debate.

National Association for the Advancement of Colored People

In 1938, Baker applied for membership in the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). In 1940 she became a field secretary for the NAACP. As a field secretary, Baker traveled throughout the country visiting local chapters and recruiting new members for the NAACP's local chapters (Garrow, 2003). The NAACP was seen as an organization that was only concerned with the middle class educated Black community (Baker, 1977). Baker's travels throughout the Deep South put an end to this myth.

In early 1943, Baker became the NAACP's national director of branches (Garrow, 2003). As the national director, Baker 'began to deal with such things as developing leadership training sessions or conferences and trying to deal with the whole matter of reducing the work of the NAACP to where the people supporting it could articulate it…" (Baker, 1977, p. 48). Throughout her time in the NAACP, Baker struggled to "democratize the organization and to move it away from legalism as a primary strategy for combating discrimination" (Ransby, 1994, p. 291). Baker became frustrated with the NAACP national office's top-down approach to organization building, elite-controlled litigating, and lobbying (Garrow, 2003). Ransby (2003) states the national leadership did not appreciate that the branches were the essence of the organization's strength. Baker felt that the NAACP should involve all its members in its decision-making strategies and it should link the struggles for racial equality with other campaigns for social justice. Baker was also interested in honing the decision-making and leadership skills of the local membership (Ransby, 1994). Baker was sensitive to the needs of people. She believed that the only way to get Blacks to effectively resist racial

oppression in the South was to get them to unify and understand that they have the power to protect themselves. Baker stated:

> The major job was getting people to understand that they had something within their power that they could use, and it could only be used if they understand what was happening, and how group action could counter violence even when it was perpetrated by the police or, in some instances, the state. My basic sense of it has always been to get people to understand that in the long run they themselves are the only protection they have against violence or injustice…they cannot look for salvation anywhere but to themselves (Lerner, 1972, p. 347).

In 1944, Baker wanted to "transform the local branches from being centers of sporadic activity to becoming centers of sustained and dynamic community leadership' (Garrow, 2001). She met opposition from NAACP's leadership because the national office was only interested in the branches financial obligation to headquarters—paying dues (Garrow, 2001).

Through her work with the NAACP, Baker was able to establish a large network of contacts with African American grassroots activists. Unable to redirect the NAACP's focus to grassroots organizing, Baker resigned as director of branches in 1946, but she continued her work with the organization as an active volunteer in the position of president of the New York branch. In 1951 while volunteering with the NAACP, Baker was involved with the Liberal Party and ran as a candidate for the New York City Council. She was not successful in this venture. She also worked at fund-raising with the National Urban League and several other health organizations (Lerner, 1972). She continued with volunteer work in the NAACP. In 1954 when the Supreme Court handed down its decision on desegregation, Baker led the fight for school reforms and demanded the desegregation of New York City schools and greater involvement of parents in decision-making (Ransby, 1994).

In Friendship

In 1956, Baker and two friends, Bayard Rustin and Stanley Levison formed the civil rights group In Friendship in New York. Baker was the executive secretary and united several groups under In Friendship. In Friendship was set up to help meet the needs of Blacks in the South who were displaced from the land and were victims of racial terrorism because of their civil rights activities (Baker, 1968). In Friendship provided resources to help activists in the South who were fighting racist oppression on the front lines. In Friendship lasted for three years because the organization could not sustain itself (Ransby, 2003). Baker, Rustin, and Levison shifted their focus from raising funds to consulting with the leaders of the Montgomery Movement in the hope of forming an organization (Ransby, 2003). Baker said that In Friendship had connections with the Liberal Labor establishment. She did not elaborate on the connections.

Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC)

During the time Baker, Rustin, and Levinson were working with In Friendship; they began discussions on the need to develop a mass force in the South that would counterbalance the NAACP, which was largely based in the North. Also after the Montgomery Bus Boycott, "there was no organizational machinery for making use of the people who had been involved in the boycott" (Baker, 1968, p. 9). Out of these discussions came the idea for SCLC. Rustin and Levinson contacted Martin Luther King, Jr. and negotiations started behind the scene (Baker, 1968). Rustin and Baker worked behind the scenes until SCLC was formally organized. Baker (1968) described the behind the scenes work that took place. She said they sat up most nights until two and three

o'clock in the morning. Baker discussed her role in the formation of SCLC. She assisted in securing venues for meetings. She drafted and prepared statements, provided information and mimeograph skills, and did consultation. King and Ralph Abernathy did not have much organizational experience while Baker had more experience and connection with people who were involved in the civil rights movement. Therefore, Baker was able to provide the knowledge that was needed for starting an organization (Baker, 1968). King and the Montgomery group were selected to extend mass action in the South because the NAACP with its wide spread of membership throughout the South, had a philosophy that did not support real confrontation with mass action as a means of challenging racial oppression and segregation (Baker, 1968). Baker said that when she came out of the Depression, she came out with a different point of view as to what is real success.

> I began to feel that my greatest sense of success would be to succeed in doing with people some of the things that I thought would raise the level of masses of people, rather than the individual being accepted by the Establishment. So, this kind of personal thinking, combined with, say, even the little bit more radical thinking—because at one time the pacifist movement was a radical concept. And then, I think, in all probability, Stanley had come out of the New York left there, and I had exposure to it because I had been friendly with people who were in the Communist Party and all the rest of the Left forces, which were oriented in the direction of mass action (Baker, 1968, p. 12).

Baker did not elaborate on her connection with the Pacifist Movement; expect to state that the basis of the Pacifist Movement was non-violence. This movement had some influence on the non-violent concept that was used in Montgomery.

There was a need for someone to organize the SCLC office in Atlanta and coordinate the organization's first South-wide project, which were simultaneous meetings

in 20 cities on February 12th, 1958 (Baker, 1968, Baker 1972). The purpose of the meetings was to encourage people to register to vote. After further meetings between Rustin, Levinson, and King, a decision was made that Baker would move to Atlanta immediately to help organize SCLC. Baker was irritated that her friends had committed her to going to Atlanta without her permission. "But my sense of values carries with it something to this effect: that the welfare of the whole, of the people or a group of people, is much more important than the ego satisfaction of the individual" (Baker, 1968, p. 18). Baker went to Atlanta on January 9th, 1958 to start a major project for SCLC. After much prodding of SCLC ministers, Baker found that there was the need for a more formal civil rights organization with a staff (Baker, 1968). When Baker went to SCLC she did not have a title and that did not bother her because it was not unusual (Baker, 1972). At first she worked out of her room at the Savoy Hotel in Atlanta eventually she was given office space (Baker, 1972).

Baker went to SCLC with the idea of staying with the organization for only six weeks, but remained for two and a half years because there was no one to take over from her and there were objections to Bayard Rustin taking over because of his lifestyle. Also, SCLC chairman wanted a male minister to take over from Baker. Baker worked with SCLC periodically for a small salary and continued living in New York because she was raising her niece (Baker, 1968). SCLC was able to raise funds from large mass meetings to support the organization. This manner of raising funds was similar to how churches raised money by having the people put in money through offertory collections, tithes, and special fund raising drives. For the two and a half years that Baker stayed with SCLC, she worked on mass voter registration, education, workshop leadership conference on non-

violence, and organized an office for SCLC in Shreveport, Louisiana. Baker said, "we tried to get the leadership to lend itself to going into some of these counties in Alabama, and especially the Wilcox County, and the like in which Negroes had not voted. We did not succeed too much in that direction" (Baker, 1968, p. 24). Baker said that SCLC never went into Mississippi because the organization did not develop an organizing technique.

> I've always characterized the difference in saying that they went in for mobilization. And, to be honest, in terms of the historical facts, their mobilization usually was predicated upon some effort at organizing by someone else. And, at this stage, it was largely SNCC. As far as Mississippi was concerned, SNCC was too strong a force, I think, there for any effort that comes in to sort of supercede the leadership that's involved there, because SNCC did involve local people. It involved local people who were not in the ministerial orientation (Baker, 1968, p. 30).

Baptist male ministers dominated SCLC leadership. Baker commented that the ministers had the power to put themselves in office. The majority of people who attended the initial meeting in Montgomery to discuss the formation of SCLC were ministers. Therefore the ministers became the officers of SCLC. The name SCLC was selected because the Christian theme made the organization less of a suspect to the power structure (Baker, 1968).

Baker was instrumental in getting Reverend John Tilly to come to SCLC as the director. However, she remained for a short while with the organization to offer him support. After Reverend Tilly left SCLC, Baker was offered the position as the director "with a cut in whatever little salary I was getting, which was not new to me" (Baker, 1968). After the summer of 1960, Ella Baker left SCLC because she had done what she went to Atlanta to do and that was to organize SCLC. She did not get the ministers to

accept her idea about mass direct action, group-centered leadership, or organizing in the rural southern areas.

From the late 1930s onward Baker's political work was consistent with the worldview that she constructed from her family and childhood traditions that were rooted in slavery and resistance, her experiences at Shaw University, and her life in Harlem. She used experiences and ideas to formulate and advocate a theory of community organizing that were similar to her own upbringing.

Summary

The goal of this study is to describe grassroots leadership within a nonhierarchical organization by examining social and political activism and grassroots movements as they relate to the leadership style of Ella Baker and the SNCC. Baker took the lessons that she learned from her family and community and created an innovative understanding of leadership in an innovative organization. Baker was a facilitator, creating processes and methods for others to express themselves and make decisions; as a coordinator, creating situations that build and strengthen collective efforts; as a teacher without a traditional classroom, challenging, empowering, and working with others to empower themselves to organize and take charge of their lives to learn, build, and expand their talents to be leaders. Baker saw no values in traditional leadership models for mobilizing people to build community and empowering people to build movements to transform society. Baker believed that the community was the base and the base was the foundation for change in American society. Baker's ideas about leadership and organizing were not

taken from textbooks. She drew her ideas from her family and its tradition rooted in slavery and resistance. Ransby (1994) states:

> There was a great sense of pride and a clear sense of history among Baker's relatives. All of Ella's grandparents had been slaves and their experiences, passed on to Ella and her siblings, became a part of her own repertoire of stories which connected her in a very personal way to the legacy of slavery and to more than a century of black resistance to oppression, and a deep sense of community cooperation, formed the core of her strong social resistance (Ransby, 1994, p. 289).

CHAPTER SEVEN – CASE OF ELLA BAKER AND THE SNCC

Introduction

Ella Baker and the SNCC have employed many organizational and leadership developmental strategies that provided valuable lessons for organizations, including educational institutions. It is hoped that this research will give insights that will assist educational institutions in working towards restructuring their organizations. Schools are normally organized around an authority principle that is a system of domination and subordination. This authority principle has been in effect for a very long time from the classroom to the administrative level. As schools move toward shared decision-making, which is a process of extending the base of leadership through a governance structure to include school teams (leadership teams, grade level teams, technology teams, school improvement teams, assessment teams, etc) that were not included in the decision-making process before, they need models from which to learn. Foster (1986) provides a framework for interpreting attempts to democratize governance in schools. In Foster's model, leadership does not occupy a position of authority because all members of the school community may at times be followers and at other times be leaders. Leadership is seen in "leadership acts." Foster (1986) defines "leadership acts" as the acts that encourage "democratic and rational participation" in a school (p. 187). Foster argues for democratic and rational participation by all individuals.

In the 1960's ideas about democracy and participation were labeled "participatory democracy" which is "bringing together in a new formulation the traditional appeal of democracy with an innovative tie to broader participation (Mueller, 1993, p. 51). Mueller (1993) argues that participatory democracy legitimized an active public voice in several

decisions made by government. Mueller's examples of this active public voice are seen in the challenge to the composition of the Democratic Party in 1964 by the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party (MFDP), in decisions regarding the foreign policy on the Vietnam War, and in the purchase of new weapons such as the B-1 bomber and the MX missile. Mueller sees participatory democracy as a call for direct action, which is part of the broad process of collective activism. Mueller argues "that the basic themes of participatory democracy were first articulated and given witness by Ella Baker" (p. 53). Baker's ideas were the basis for her support of the independent student-led civil rights organization—Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC). SNCC tested the ideas of participatory leadership daily in practice and served as a model for other student-led organizations (Mueller, 1993). Ella Baker and the SNCC can be viewed as an important precursor in the efforts to restructure organizations. Payne (1989) states:

> If there is one idea that seems central to her approach, it may be the idea of group-centered leadership rather than leader-centered groups…. In contrast to the more traditional conception of leadership as moving people and directing events, hers was a conception of leadership as teaching, a conception that changes the nature of what it means to be successful (p. 892).

Ella Baker was not in favor of centralized leadership; even if in some cases, if such a leadership had very good intentions. Baker (1972) states:

> I have always felt it was a handicap for oppressed people to depend so largely on a leader, because unfortunately in our culture, the charismatic leader usually becomes a leader because he has found a spot in the public limelight. It usually means that the media made him, and the media may undo him. There is also the danger in our culture that, because a person is called upon to give public statement and is acclaimed by the establishment, such a person gets to the point of believing that he is the movement. Such people get so involved with playing the game of being important that they exhaust themselves and their time and they don't do the work of actually organizing people (p. 351).

The historical record of social reforms and Black women's activism is one that has been overlooked for a very long time. Black women's participation in social movement compels investigation because of their struggle and deep commitment against racism, sexism, and economic oppression. Black women's contributions, although they were the backbone of the civil rights movement, were unrecognized by historians. Today, still very few students know about Black women's contributions to the civil rights movement and to African Americans in general. This is true of Ella Baker. While most people know about Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., only a few people have some knowledge about Ella Baker and her work.

This study about Ella Baker and the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (referred to as SNCC) describes grassroots leadership and political activism within a nonhierarchical organization that created social change in America. The research questions that this case study answered are:

1. What type of leadership did Ella Baker demonstrate?
2. In what historical context did Ella Baker organize the SNCC?
3. How did the SNCC under Baker's guidance, work toward bringing societal change in America?
4. What lessons can be learned about organizational leadership and women's leadership from Ella Baker and the SNCC?

Ella Baker's Theory of Group Centered Leadership (Research Question1)

Leader-Centered Leadership

When one reads about Ella Baker's professional life, one sees that Baker has clearly defined her leadership style. Baker did not support the leadership approach of some Black leaders: the accommodationist approach of Booker T. Washington, the need for scholastic educational leaders called the "Talented Tenth" that was put forward by W.E.B. Du Bois, although Du Bois was probably referring to people like Baker when he talked about the 'Talented Tenth," and the charismatic leadership style of Martin Luther King, Jr. She saw flaws in these three types of leadership. Baker supported the organizing style of leadership that was carried out by Black southern women (Frederiksen-Bohannon, 2005; Petty, 1996).

In the major civil rights organizations, Baker was a witness to the leadership styles of men. In the NAACP, Baker saw how power and authority were tightly concentrated in the NAACP national office. Local offices did not get enough opportunities to participate in the decisions that were made at the national office. Baker wanted local offices to make decisions for themselves, but local offices felt that their role was to support the national office, not run their own local programs. Baker was aware that the NAACP local branches were not doing well because of the national office's position of not allowing local offices to contribute in a positive way to the civil rights struggle (Baker, 1968, Frederiksen-Bohannon, 2005; Grant, 1998, 2005; Payne, 1995; Ransby, 2003). Baker felt that NAACP was too middle class and did not address the issues of poor Black people. She accused NAACP president, Walter White of trying to earn recognition from Whites and giving too much attention to the NAACP's image

(Baker, 1968). She argued that the NAACP leadership was too accommodating and described Walter White as an egocentric man. Baker (1968) stated:

> Well, I think that Walter's whole career is indicative of a large degree of egocentricity. Perhaps to be generous, you would have to say that he was a product of his period, which was that of self-projection in the name of organizational interest. He was also one of the best lobbyists of the period…. I think there was a great deal of self-interest, let's call it, that dominated his operations.
>
> When I went to the Association I learned a few things by observation. One of the things that used to strike me was his need to impress people, even just people who came into the office. He'd keep them waiting while you got the impression that he was terribly busy with calls to Washington. I've seen such exhibitions in that direction as having someone come out of his office to the switchboard operator—which at that time was sort of located in the center of wherever people were waiting—and ask to call such-and-such a place, or a call through to Mr. So-and-So, or somebody like this, you see. …. Unfortunately he also felt the need to impress government people. He had not learned, as many people still have not learned, that if you are involved with people and organizing them as a force you didn't have to go and seek out the establishment people. They would seek you out (p. 6).

Baker wanted White to be of greater assistance to the local offices and Black people (Payne, 1995; Petty, 1996). According to Baker (1968), Walter White was not the only egocentric man in the NAACP. "Walter didn't have an exclusive corner on that" (p. 6). Baker said that Du Bois may not have been as egocentric as Walter White—"I don't know—he certainly was not the easiest person to approach…. I made no effort to establish any relationship with him." (p. 7).

Baker criticized the leadership style of Martin Luther King, Jr. She wanted SCLC to be the kind of organization that promoted group-centered leadership rather than a leader-centered leadership. SCLC promoted a centralized figure as the main leader of the movement. Baker did not believe in the charismatic leadership style or in King's style of organizing (Grant, 1988; Petty, 1996; Ransby, 2003). She felt that King's celebrity status inhibited the emergence of local struggles and local leaders (Petty, 1996; Ransby, 2003).

Robert Moses, an SNCC activist, described Baker as someone you could trust and respect because of what she had done with her life. He said that Baker was extremely level headed and matter of fact about King as a person. She saw the long struggle of her people, which was bigger than one person. Baker was always sharp-tongued, but always for a good purpose—for the good of all Black people. Moses said that without Baker, it would be very difficult for SNCC to set up the way it was, independent of King and SCLC (Moses, 1982). Baker believed that charismatic leaders placed too much importance on themselves, than the movement they are leading. She wanted another type of leadership for movement groups. Baker (1968) stated:

> You see, I've never felt it necessary for one person to embody all that's needed in a leadership for a group of people. This comes back again to my old cliché about a leader-centered group over a group centered leadership. The group comes first in my mind. So as far as Martin was concerned, as far as anybody also is concerned, they were only a part of the whole. And the most important was, and still is in my mind, is to develop to the point that they don't need the strong, savior-type leader (p. 39).

Baker felt that the leaders of the established civil rights organizations were not confronting the power structure, but trying to elicit concessions by different means. She referred to this type of leadership as accommodating leadership. Baker (1968) stated, "They accommodated themselves to the system, and their sense of achievement was largely in the direction of the extent to which you, as the individual, could become acceptable to or accepted by the power structure; and you become a negotiator for people, not a leader of developing people at all" (p. 11). Clearly, Baker did not support leader-centered leadership.

Group-Centered Leadership

Ella Baker described leadership as group-centered (Dallard, 1990; Waldschmidt-Nelson, 2001). Baker made a distinction between leader-centered group and group-centered leadership.

> All my life concern has been that the most important things should be the development of people to take care of themselves, you see, I never believed in the strong leader. Because the strong leader exalts and produces a weak following so that I think, so if I had any influence I think it lodges in the direction of the leadership concept that I believe in namely that leadership shouldn't be centered. You should instead of having what you call a leader centered group you have a group centered leadership…. That the major concern is that of the group and instead of trying to develop a symbolic leader you try to [pause] the difference possible is the group so that you can develop leadership in the group (Baker, 1967, p. 5).

Group-centered leadership is developed in groups that are committed to building collective power to struggle for collective goals. In group-centered leadership, there is no place for the one ideal type of leader. Group-centered leadership is a progressive type of leadership where people come together and organize for a community cause, learn from mistakes and successes, and become stronger in the process of doing so, because people who believe in themselves and feel a sense of their own power and self-worth can affect and make changes in their society (Ransby, 2003).

Baker's thrust was for organizations to think differently about the concept of leadership. She felt that the concept of leadership that was most popular in organizations was the one where a person had these special qualities and powers that made him a leader. Baker (1968) argued:

> …instead of trying to develop people around a leader, the thrust, in my direction, should be that the first consideration is to try to develop leadership out of the group and to spread the leadership roles so that you develop—in order words, you're organizing people to be self sufficient rather than

to be dependent upon the charismatic leader or the Moses-type-leader (p. 37).

Baker wanted SCLC to function as a "group-centered leadership [organization], rather than a leadership-centered group" (Frederiksen-Bohannon, 2005 p. 94). Baker said:

> We are really passing through a revolutionary period….SCLC has a real opportunity to develop the mass action that we must have to implement school decisions, the 1957 Civil Rights Act, etc. But if we fail to act, sooner or later some other group will provide the leadership, because mass action is sorely needed (Frederiksen-Bohannon, 2005, p. 94).

Ella Baker had a radical, democratic, and humanistic worldview. She had a great deal of confidence in the power of poor and working class Black people to lead themselves. She emphasized grassroots group-centered leadership and that set her apart from the other civil rights leaders (Petty, 1996; Ransby, 2003). Baker's view of leadership is demonstrated by the process of organizing people into action, rather than heading up their action. She believed in the adage that it is more important for people to learn how to fish and farm rather than to give them food. Baker strongly believed in allowing people to lead themselves. She expressed, "no one is going to do for you that which you can do for yourself" (Grant, 2001, p. 39). This collective type of leadership was part of the southern tradition that had its roots in slavery. Petty (1996) describes group-centered leadership that Black southern women practiced for the purpose of implementing change.

> Group-centered leadership requires skill development, decision making by consensus, planning and carrying out actions, making mistakes, and talking, talking, talking. Training people for such a leadership required teaching a great deal of process. In measuring the success of an action, therefore, it may be as important to measure how much people learned from planning and carrying out the action as it is to measure whether the action itself accomplished its goal. (p. 148).

While working with NAACP, Baker identified with the people that she served.

When she was asked the question about the basis on which she organized people, Baker responded:

> You start where the people are…. If you feel you are a part of them and they are a part of you, you don't say "I'm-a-part-of-you." What you really do is, you point out something. Especially the lower-class people, the people who'd felt the heel of oppression, see, they knew what you were talking about when you spoke about police brutality (Cantarow & Gushee-O'Malley, 1980, p. 72).

Baker said that the 1954 Supreme Court school decision in New York had to do with breaking down segregation. You begin by organizing people around that issue in terms of their level of understanding. Then you try to reach from one level of understanding to another. Sometimes it is necessary to use different strategies to focus on the question because getting people to focus on the question is very important in organizing (Baker, undated interview).

For Baker, organizing people was not just a job; it was a desire to help poor Black people in need. People who were struggling daily to survive in a cruel system of racial oppression. Baker was organizing people to fight for their freedom. Dallard (1990) states, "Her goal was to free her people from racial prejudice and discrimination. Blacks in the United States have struggled for centuries to remove injustices" (p, 6). Baker talked about a prerequisite to organizing which is the recognition on the part of the established powers that people have a right to participate in decisions that affect their lives. People must be aware of the fact that this is their right (Baker, 1968).

Baker's goal of learning about people and identifying with them, learning about their desires and goals and working with this information to organize people is what Greenleaf (1977) refers to as servant leadership and Burns (1978) calls transformational leadership. Baker believed that leadership should work to serve people for leadership to

have real value. If leadership lacks value, then it is not leadership. Baker was a good listener who listened to people. She wanted to know about them and hear what they have to say (Grant, 1998; Taitt-Magubane, 2007). Servant leaders are good listeners. The practice of listening that Baker espoused is in line with Greenleaf's claim that listening could powerfully build "strength in others" (p. 17). Baker transformed people by listening, teaching, and educating. Simply put, she provided the tools to get the job done (Grant, 1998; Taitt-Magubane, 2007). Baker demonstrated Freire's (1973) dialogic approach to transformation and education. Ransby (2003) concurs with this. Ransby states:

> Baker's pedagogical style paralleled that of her contemporary, Paulo Freire, the radical Brazilian educator. Three key tenets of Freire's educational philosophy can be found in Baker's practice and in the Freedom Schools themselves. The first is the notion that "to teach is not to transfer knowledge but to create the possibility for the production or construction of knowledge. The second idea is that teaching and learning should be reciprocal; it would be a contradiction for a teacher who believed in "democracy and freedom" to "at the same time act arrogance" and be unwilling to listen across boundaries of difference. The final perspective that Freire and Baker shared, one that was manifest in the practices and philosophy of SNCC's Freedom Schools, is skepticism about the conservative impact of traditional ways of teaching and a conviction that a more democratic learning environment has a liberatory potential (p. 328).

Both Baker and Freire believed that to teach is to lead and create the possibility for the production and construction of knowledge among learners. For Baker, it is important to recognize that teaching and learning is the same and there should be a willingness to listen and learn from each other. Teaching is not a top-down process, it is an occasion for everyone to participate, ask questions, and learn from each other.

Baker created opportunities for people to grow and learn together. She did not judge or make assumptions about the people she served. She focused her attention on

poor Black people to help them see their own ideas and visions, and she did so by working in rural areas in the South. She used what she learned about the people and assisted them in taking action for what they believed in.

Theory of Group-Centered Leadership in Action: SNCC 1960 -1964 (Research Question 2)

The Birth of SNCC

In the late afternoon on Monday, February 1, 1960 four freshmen college students sat down at a lunch counter in Greensboro, North Carolina and challenged segregation. Carson (1981) states that the students acted on suppressed resentments that eventually led to a radical form of protest. The students did not have organizational plans; they were just determined to challenge offensive Jim Crow laws that were based on racial segregation and oppression. Joseph McNeil, Izell Blair, Jr., Franklin McCain, and David Richmond purchased a few items at Woolworth's store in Greensboro, North Carolina and then sat down at the lunch counter reserved for "Whites Only." The waitress refused to serve them and requested that they leave. The students felt that they have shopped in the store; therefore they earned the right to sit down (Carson, 1981; Frederiksen-Bohannon, 2005; Weisbrot, 1990). The four students sat at the lunch counter without being served until the store closed. On returning to their college campus, they discussed the sit-in with other students who decided to join them. (Carson, 1981; Dallard, 1990; Weisbrot, 1990). The next day a large group of about 60 students joined the sit-ins at the lunch counter. The sit-ins attracted the attention of state officials who agreed to discuss the situation to find an "honorable resolution" (Carson, 1981). Although the sit-ins in Greensboro were

temporarily discontinued, aided by media coverage, students in other colleges in North Carolina quickly started sit-ins. Sit-ins involving thousands of Black students and some Whites spread throughout the South like wildfire (Carson, 1981; Weisbrot, 1990). The college students' decision to sit-in and demonstrate segregated businesses and facilities came from the realization that it would take a lot more than the normal, orderly government channels to end racism and oppression (Cantarow, O'Malley, & Hartman-Strom, 1980). The sit-ins occurred without coordination, however they proved to be the climax in a long struggle for civil rights that started with slave resistance (Greenberg, 1998; Weisbrot, 1990).

The initial Greensboro sit-in was peaceful, but this was not the case for other sit-ins. Although most Black college student protestors adhered to a strict discipline of nonviolence, in Portsmouth Virginia, Black and White high school students fought each other after a sit-in (Carson, 1981). In many instances, Black college student protestors were attacked by White mobs, but the students still engaged in what Carson (1981) refers to as a "passively aggressive behavior—stepping over the line and waiting, rather then exhibiting overtly hostile or revolutionary behavior" (p. 10). The use of nonviolence techniques in the sit-ins was based on Christian values that offered the students some rewards: an emotional release through militancy, moral superiority, and the possibility of achieving desegregation (Carson, 1981). Although the sit-ins were plagued by interracial tensions that had been suppressed in the South, many Blacks realized that nonviolent direct action was the beginning of a new political awareness. "For the Black students in the spring of 1960, it offered an almost irresistible model for social action" (Carson, 1981, p. 12).

"SNCC was born during a period of extensive student protest activity" (Carson, 1981, p. 19). Ella Baker, who was the executive director of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC), called the student conference that was held at her alma mater, Shaw University in Raleigh, South Carolina on April 16-18, 1960 (Carson, 1981; Grant, 1998; Ransby, 2003). Baker saw the need " to bring the students together, the young people who had emerged in the sit-ins for the purpose of developing some basis, at least, for communication, which was the first hope, and, hopefully, a basis for coordination of activities" (Baker, 1968, p. 41). Baker recalled how the conference was organized.

> I had pushed for a meeting for the kids at which they would decide whether to become, I mean, whether they wanted to be a coordinated body or whether they still wanted to just continue to be out there, each on his own. But, at least, my minimum consideration was that certainly out of it should come some machinery for communication, for continued communication and, coordination. So I sent out a very mild sort of call—one-sheet thing—calling for students to come on a given date or to elicit their interest in it, signed by myself and Martin—which I signed, of course—to, first, those who had emerged in leadership roles that had been publicized—like Charlie Jones up in Charlotte and a couple of others whom I knew—then, to student organizations in different colleges from which there had been no evidence of sit-ins, but maybe subsequently developed, and whatever resources I had for reaching people.
>
> I did send out this little call with the idea of getting 100 or 120. We began to allocate the number of representatives that could come from different areas on the basis of the relative strength as we saw it. Unfortunately, it was all my judgment, maybe. So just as the sit-ins had skyrocketed or escalated without rhyme or reason, so the response to the concept a conference escalated beyond our expectations. I think there were 49 colleges and universities North of the Mason and Dixon Line that wanted to come, which meant there was the whole business of the North and the White student leadership. Then from the South it was a larger number of students. Then, of course grownups (Baker, 1968, p. 42).

There were 300 people at the Easter meeting in Raleigh (Baker, 1968). More than 120 Black students representing 56 colleges and high schools attended the conference (Carson, 1981; Sellers & Terrell, 1973). There were representatives from the major civil rights organizations—NAACP, CORE, and SCLC—who wanted control of the students. Ella Baker (1968) stated:

> You could not have a real leadership training conference in that setting. So, it became a sort of "mountain top experience." I had thought to get Jim Lawson as the keynote speaker because, number one, I thought Jim Lawson was—the Reverend James Lawson—I knew he was, in terms of historical devotion to and knowledge of the non-violent concept, he was a peer. We got him to speak. And as I recall, there was a little bit of questioning of me by the SCLC executive committee, or whatever committee was relating to the issue at all, as to—I think they wanted SCLC projected more, and I insisted that I felt Jim was a better person. They, at one stage, said something about my doing it, and I often wondered whether it was because I was on my way out by that stage, and they knew it, or whether it was in deference to their desire to have, really, a SCLC projection. But, anyway, I prevailed, because Jim had relationships with the students in Nashville. He had done an excellent job. If you recall, the Nashville students were more fundamentally grounded in the non-violent concepts and philosophy. So, that prevailed. Then, of course, we had the big mass meeting at which Dr. King spoke, and so forth and so on (p. 43).

Baker wanted the students to remain independent; therefore she resisted the efforts of the major civil rights organizations to control the students. At the conference, the students committed to the principles nonviolence and saw it as a rationale for their protest (Baker, 1968). The students from Nashville had experience in nonviolence that was expressed by James Lawson, a Vanderbilt seminarian who had embraced Gandhi's nonviolent direct action. The students from Atlanta led by Julian Bond and Lonnie King who had participated in sit-ins and had co-published a document on the Atlanta Appeal for Human

Rights (Ransby, 2003). Ella Baker admired and appreciated that the students had passion and ideas of their own.

At the student meeting, Northern and Southern students made a decision that the leadership for the student group would be a Southern leadership. Northern students agreed to become part of any organization that was set up (Baker, 1968). Baker felt that having both groups state their roles in the student organization was a good idea because the Northern students came from Yale, Harvard, Brown, and City College and were more articulate than the Southern students. The Southern students came to the meeting with a simple philosophy which is the Christian, nonviolent approach (Baker, 1968). Southern students started the sit-ins and endured violence; therefore, Baker felt that they should be the ones to structure any organization that would come from the conference (Baker, 1968; Carson, 1981; Zinn 1985). Baker strongly believed in "the right of the people who were under the heel to be the ones to decide what action they were going to take to get from under their oppression" (Baker, 1966, p.176). Baker told the students the sit-ins were part of a worldwide struggle to end oppression and they should see themselves as an important part of the struggle to bring about change. At the end of the conference the students agreed to meet monthly in Atlanta during the summer (Baker, 1968).

SNCC is a Protest and it is an Affirmation

The students displayed their dissatisfaction with race relations in the United States as is seen in their protest and affirmation.

> We protest and take direct action against discrimination. We affirm equality and brotherhood of all men, the tenets of American democracy as set forth in the Constitution, and the traditions of social justice, which permeate our Judaic-Christian heritage. Hypocrisy and

> blindness will not lead this world to freedom. We cannot function as a democratic nation until we know that human potential is our greatest resource and a vigorous democracy our most powerful weapon. This means that every person within our land must be guaranteed his moral rights as a human and his legal rights as a citizen of the United States of America. This is the inescapable responsibility of the federal government ("This is SNCC," 1960).

SNCC Organizational Structure

Baker (1968) discussed how SNCC was set up in the beginning. Baker stated that at the Raleigh conference in April 1960, SCLC pushed for the students to be structured in an organization.

> …In the first place, it was more interested in trying to push for a structured result out of this meeting than I was. I was against trying to force the kids to come to a structure just because they were there. To me, it was bad organization. Why should they, in three days, arrive at a point it had taken SCLC three years to arrive at, or any other group? So, I looked upon it as the beginning of a student-structured movement. So, there was a good deal of confrontation with some within the adult SCLC leadership as to what would come out of this meeting. I held for the position that I told you I advocated, namely, to try to get them at least to the point where they would have a continuations committee that could work out a much more fundamental, structured program if this was what they seemed to want…
>
> For instance, there was definite effort made to get the students to decide to become an arm of SCLC. But the students—some began to fight it. It became such a hot issue that this was on the first part of the agenda of decisions—issues to be decided. We had met Friday night, we met all day Saturday, and, I think, this was Sunday morning, or Saturday night, I forget which, you know, that we had reached this point. It became such a hot issue that you had to turn the agenda upside down and deal with some issues beforehand. First, they had to stop and pray and sing some, you know, because this was the peaceful movement, you know. Jim Lawson, with his calm, was trying to get them to sing and pray. So they finally, then, came back to the issue of becoming an arm of SCLC. They decided not to become an arm of SCLC, but to retain an independence of their own, or seek to retain an independence, and they would cooperate with SCLC as with other organizations…. This was the first decision in terms of how they would go (Baker. 1968, p. 47).

The students formed a continuations committee, with two representatives from each state. They met in May and made the decision to meet in Atlanta every month during the summer and then by fall they worked out a proposal for a more permanent arrangement (Baker, 1968). Atlanta was chosen for the students' meeting place because it was centrally located to the stronger student organizations that had emerged in student leadership during the sit-ins. The student organizations were located in Atlanta, Tennessee, Nashville, Chattanooga, Virginia, North Carolina, and South Carolina (Baker, 1968).

During the summer of 1960, the students rented office space in the SCLC office in Atlanta. Baker was instrumental in helping the students to acquire the office. Jane Stembridge, a White student at the Union Theological Seminary in New York worked in SNCC office for a small salary (Baker, 1968). July 4th, 1960, both Jane and Baker worked on SNCC's presentation for the Democratic Convention in California. The decision was made for two students to go to the convention and be joined by one who was already based in California. Bernard Lee and Marion Barry went to California (Baker, 1968). The students met with the Democratic Committees and addressed the delegates on civil rights and voting (Moses, 1982).

When the students met in Atlanta in the summer of 1960, they called themselves the Temporary Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee. After subsequent meetings in Atlanta, the name was changed to the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (Baker, 1968). During the summer meetings, it was agreed that the adults would raise funds for the students who needed just enough money to keep their organization going.

Baker talked about the personalities of the students in SNCC during the early days and the rivalry between the different student groups. Baker said that the students from the different colleges had a sense of their own importance. The group from Howard University "came with a certain amount of capacity to articulate and to defend positions to advance ideas" (Baker, 1968, p. 51). The students from the South did not know how to put forth a motion. For most of the Southern students, the only organizational experience was when they got involved in the sit-ins. Baker felt that the pattern of school participation and of articulation on ideas had deteriorated in Southern schools and she based this on the kind of participation that was expected of students when she attended school (Baker, 1968). Baker felt that the more superior group was the Nashville students. They had greater training and in-depth knowledge of the non-violent philosophy. They had a consistent pattern of workshops under Jim Lawson who was supported by Reverend C.T. Vivian and Reverend Kelly Miller Smith who dealt with ideas much more than many of the other ministers (Baker, 1968).

Baker (1968) talked about the stress and strain that the students faced when they first came together. She said that the stress and strain was based on the over-aggressiveness on the part of some of the students from Howard University and North Carolina, especially those students who had much more exposure than students from the other schools. She explained that some of the strain was a natural development between "strong leaders." Baker identified some of these "strong leaders."

> Charles Jones had emerged in Charlotte as "the" leader. He had, perhaps, been ordained from years back to be a leader. You know how these things developed. Lonnie King had emerged as "the" leader in Atlanta, and others had emerged as "the" leader. They, unfortunately, had the example of the elders who were oriented in the direction of the strong leader, you know, "the" leader.

> I think these were the forces that were at play in terms of the stresses in the beginning (p. 53).

Although there were strong leaders in SNCC, SNCC was not organized like the main civil rights organizations. In SCLC, the organization revolved around Dr. King; in SNCC, the leadership was group-centered because people did not need a leader to be strong. SNCC was organized as a coordinating and communication organization that refused to be absorbed into the major civil rights groups, but cooperated with them (Carson, 1981; Petty, 1996). SNCC activists opposed hierarchy of authority. The activists made their own decisions and the chair was a rotating position. The first chairperson was Marion Barry of Fisk University (Baker, 1968). Baker believed that the students elected Marion Barry in deference to the strength of the Nashville group and also as a reaction against the strong leader type because Barry developed from a long way back. Henry Thomas of Howard University was elected secretary (Baker, 1968).

The Coordinating Committee was composed of representatives from the sixteen Southern states and the District of Columbia. The making of policies was the responsibility of the General Conference, and the execution of fundamental policies was the responsibility of the Coordinating Committee. The General Conference elected the 26 Committee members. The Coordinating Committee made additions and replacements. The annual conference was held in the early fall and the Committee met bi-monthly. An Advisory Committee handled all policy decisions. The Committee maintained a staff at its headquarters in Atlanta, Georgia ("This is SNCC," 1960).

SNCC activists supported the idea that local community groups should determine their own direction, a position that Ella Baker tried to bring to the NAACP and SCLC (Grant, 1998; Ransby, 2003). When SNCC was first organized, Baker said that the

students saw the need for two different groups. One that would emphasize direct non-violent action and the other that would engage itself in voter registration. Baker felt that this early thought came about because some students—Chuck McDew, Charles Sherrod, and Charles Jones—were in contact with persons who had been thinking along the line of politics (Baker, 1967, 1968).

> …when the issue was posed as to whether the SNCC group should go into voter registration or continue direct nonviolent action…there were those, especially Charles Sherrod who felt that you couldn't possibly engage in community organizing in the deep, Black Belt areas without eventually running into the problem with the law and if you went in to do political education you'd still run into problems with the law and you'd still have to have mass action…demonstration. So I think that the realities of the situation demonstrated to the young people that there was no need for a division between voter registration and mass direct action (Baker, 1967, p. 2).

Baker and the students worked together to change the social system of the South through nonviolent direct action. SNCC's founding statement had a Christian theme with great emphasis on nonviolence, courage, love, and the redemptive value of community activists to replace social wrongdoings (Carson, 1981). As more people joined SNCC, secular influences became important and SNCC's vision was redirected to political protest action. SNCC members believed in the vision of changing the South and ending the oppression for all Blacks in America, and they supported the principles of a shared common leadership, consensus decision-making, and developing the leadership of local Black people (Carson, 1981; Petty, 1996).

SNCC and Leadership

Ella Baker devoted time, energy, and wisdom to SNCC from its very conception. SNCC embodied Baker's principle of participatory democracy and grassroots community

organizing that she had developed through more than 60 years of community activism. Baker and SNCC worked to create collective leadership and engaged activism that empowered many others to become active. SNCC activist Mary King (1998) wrote that SNCC activists believed that leadership was inherent in everyone and that everyone was an organizer. The activists saw leadership as a developmental process, a matter of becoming, and their role was to help it emerge and flourish in people. On organizing people, Baker (1968) stated that we are "organizing them for their own leadership rather than getting them mobilized to be dependent upon some extraneous, or outside, or imported leadership" (p. 60). Mary King said that SNCC had a pure vision of democracy (Greenberg, 1998; King, 1987). The activists believed in getting consensus from the group. It was not easy and many times there were struggles, but everyone's contribution was important and everyone was heard. King commented that the difference between SNCC and SCLC was seen in SCLC's leadership (King, 1987). In SNCC, leadership had to come from the bottom up in contrast to leadership in SCLC, which was centered in the "historical leadership of the Black church leader" (Greenberg, 1998, p. 26).

The Significance of SNCC (Research Questions 3)

Payne (1995) and Petty (1996) state that there were several conditions that led to the student movement. African nations were rejecting colonialism and seeking independence. In the United States, Black soldiers were returning to the South from World War II with a belief in human equality especially in social, political, and economic situations. The NAACP was successful in using the United States court system to litigate for equal rights for Blacks. Also, the successful Montgomery Bus Boycott in 1955

brought attention to the unequal treatment of Blacks in the United States, especially Blacks in the South. These conditions gave Baker the opportunity that she was looking for to put forward her own political views and values about leadership and community organizing.

Nonviolent Direct Action and Grassroots Struggle

At the Raleigh conference, the students adopted a statement of purpose that had a mixture of nonviolent direct action and religious tone:

> We affirm the philosophical or religious ideal of nonviolence as the foundation of our purpose, the presupposition of our faith, and the manner of our action. Nonviolence as it grows from Judaic-Christian traditions seeks a social order of justice permeated by love. Integration of human endeavor represents the crucial first step towards such a society.
>
> Through nonviolence, courage displaces fear; love transforms hate. Acceptance dissipates prejudice; hope ends despair. Peace dominates war; faith Reconciles doubt. Mutual regard cancels enmity. Justice for all overthrows injustice. The redemptive community supersedes systems of gross social immorality.
>
> Love is the central motif of nonviolence. Love is the force by which God binds man to Himself and man to man. Such love goes the extreme; it remains loving and forgiving even in the midst of hostility…(Sellers & Terrell, 1973, p. 39).

Diane Nash (1998), a SNCC activist, explained some principles of nonviolence that were held in common by SNCC members: (1) the use of truth and love to create a humane community. Truth means giving people accurate information upon which to base behavior and decisions, (2) nonviolence as an expression of love and respect of the opposition while taking into consideration that a person is never the enemy. The enemy is racism, sexism, unjust economic systems, and a system of oppressive behaviors, and (3) the recognition that oppression requires the participation of the oppressed. When oppression is identified by the oppressed, the oppressed should withdraw cooperation

from oppression. SNCC's approach to the struggle of segregation and oppression included faith and wisdom in the power of local Black people and a commitment to radical social and political activities to end segregation (Greenberg, 1998).

The students themselves ran the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee. Ella Baker was the organization's advisor and facilitator. SNCC was committed to group-centered leadership, to mass direct action, to organizing in the tradition of developing people's capacity to work on their behalf, and to community building that was participatory and involved local people in decision-making with the goal of developing local leaders. SNCC's first collective protest action was the Rock Hill, South Carolina sit-ins in the early part of 1961 (Ransby, 2003, Sitton 1961). Students vowed to break down all racial barriers by deliberately going to jail. Four student leaders were convicted of trespassing in Rock Hill. The four students refused to pay the fines of $100 each and were jailed for thirty days in York County jail (Sitton, 1961). The jailed students were Joseph C. Charles of Johnson C. Smith College in Charlotte, North Carolina; Diane Nash of Fisk University in Nashville, Tennessee; Ruby Doris Smith of Spelman College in Atlanta, Georgia; and Charles Sherrod of Virginia Union University, Richmond, Virginia. SNCC urged all students in the south to join the "jail no bail" movement in Rock Hill (Sitton, 1961). Some of SNCC activists joined Rock Hill students and provided a united front to protest segregated establishments (Carson, 1981). This protest action taken by SNCC activists showed their willingness to participate in direct protest action.

Changing American Society

Fayette and Haywood Counties, Tennessee

SNCC activists played an active role carrying out the civil rights struggle. In late 1960, on the advice of Ella Baker, SNCC built community ties with rural and small town communities. Two communities that SNCC reached out to were Fayette and Haywood Counties in southwestern Tennessee. Beginning in August 1959, Black tenant cotton farmers in Fayette and Haywood Counties were involved in an intense struggle with White landowners over finance, segregation, and citizenship. The Black farmers had lived on the land for many years and wanted to assert their rights by registering to vote for better living conditions.

SNCC activists collected food, clothing, and funds for Black sharecroppers in Fayette and Haywood Counties who were engaged in a struggle with White landowners over Black farmers' rights to vote and fight segregation (Norman, 1998; Ransby, 2003). White landowners evicted Black farmers from the land they had lived on for years because they attempted to register to vote (Carson, 1981; Ransby, 2003). SNCC did not dominate the struggle, but supported the sharecroppers to organize themselves and be the real heroes. Baker closely followed the situation in Fayette and Haywood Counties and encouraged the students to look for ways to give greater support to Blacks living there. The students gave material and moral support to Fayette and Haywood residents. Baker also visited Fayette County, met with residents, and wrote an article in the *Southern Patriot* about Black residents' deplorable living conditions (Ransby, 2003). Encouraged by Baker's article, the students wrote an article in SNCC's newsletter, the *Student Voice* about the courage and suffering of Fayette County Black residents. (Ransby, 2003).

Mississippi

In 1960 when SNCC began fieldwork in Mississippi, there were 920,595 Negroes, which constituted about 44% of the total 2,178,141 population of Mississippi. The birth rates were higher for Negroes than Whites, the mortality rates were higher, life expectancy was lower, and migration out of Mississippi was much higher for Negroes (SNCC Field Staff Report for Mississippi). See Appendix B.

Table 4 shows a comparison of the changes that took place between the Negro and White population in the different age groups in Mississippi during the period 1950 and 1960 (See Appendix C). Although the total population of Mississippi remained the same during 1950 and 1960, there was an increase in the White population and a decrease in the Negro population. The most significant change for Negroes was the large decrease in the age group 24 to 34 (SNCC Field Staff Report for Mississippi). Because employers preferred to hire employees in the age range from 20 to 34, the change in population might have resulted in increased employment for Negroes aged 34 and under.

In 1960 the Negro population in Mississippi lived mainly in rural areas. Over two-thirds of the Negroes lived in rural areas. Of the 79,545 persons who migrated from rural areas into Mississippi cities, only 5% were Nonwhite. There were no significant changes in the rural to urban redistribution of the nonwhite population during 1950 and 1960. A reason for this could be poor employment opportunities in urban Mississippi for rural nonwhites (SNCC Field Staff Report for Mississippi). See Appendix D.

In 1960, the unemployment rate for Negroes was more than 50% greater than that of Whites. During the decade 1950 and 1960, changes in the unemployment rates for Whites and Negroes remained constant resulting in a 7.1 percent unemployment rate for

Negroes and 4.5 percent for Whites. (SNCC Field Staff Report for Mississippi). This background information about Mississippi provides pertinent information on the population when SNCC workers ventured into Mississippi to start the voter registration program.

In 1960, SNCC worker Robert Moses, a New Yorker, started the voter registration programs in Amite and Liberty counties. In June 1960, under Moses' directorship, several organizations coalesced to form the Council of Federated organizations (COFO). COFO consisted of civil rights groups formed to prevent conflict arising over the distribution of Voter Education Project (VEP) funds (Carson, 1981, Ransby, 2003). Moses was the director and most of COFO's staff was SNCC field secretaries. (SNCC Field Work in Mississippi Report). The registration work activities were too dangerous and it was difficult for White SNCC activists and the Negroes who were working with them to participate in the project. Several SNCC workers encountered violence, difficulties in obtaining a place to meet, and difficulties convincing local leaders (ministers, teachers, doctors, and other professionals to take an active lead (SNCC Field Work in Mississippi Report).

SNCC central office was located at 708 Ave. N. Greenwood, Mississippi. There were 20 Negro students working as full-time field secretaries for SNCC. The students worked in SNCC offices that were located in six counties in Mississippi: Leflore (Greenwood), Washington (Greenville), Marshall (Holly Springs), Holmes (Lexington), Sunflower (Ruleville), and Bolivar (Shaw) (SNCC Field Work in Mississippi). Here is a breakdown of the population of Whites and non-Whites in the five counties in 1960. Non-Whites refer to any person who is not White. The total population of Leflore was

51,813. Nonwhites formed 64.6% of the population. Only 123 (1.2%) Negroes were registered to vote. The total population of Washington was 70,504. Nonwhites formed 55.2% of the population. There were 2,563 (12.4%) Negroes registered to vote. In Marshall, the total population was 25,106. Nonwhites made up 70.4% of the population. Only 607 (.2%) Negroes were registered to vote. Holmes had a population of 33,301. Nonwhites comprised 72.0 % of the population. Only 61 (.5%) of the Negro population were registered to vote. Sunflower's total population was 56,031 with 67.8% Nonwhites. Only 161 (1.2%) Negroes were registered to vote (SNCC Field Work in Mississippi).

The seriousness of the race problem in the social and political life of Negroes living in Mississippi was very acute, even though Negroes were in the majority in Leflore, Washington, Marshall, Holmes, and Sunflower as shown in SNCC Field Work in Mississippi Report, only a small percentage of Nonwhites were registered to vote in each county. When SNCC went into Mississippi, Negroes were already experiencing harsh violence from Whites. SNCC workers were attacked violently in an effort to stop the voter registration program. Violence continued to stalk the voter registration project in Mississippi. In Greenwood located in Leflore County, several SNCC student workers were terrorized as they tried to secure food for Negro sharecroppers who were denied Federal surplus food relief. About 22,000 people were denied Federally supplied surplus food. As Negroes tried to register to vote, Negro businesses were burned; SNCC field secretaries were jailed (for example, SNCC student activist, Samuel Block was arrested seven times, beaten twice, and jumped from a second story window in August, 1962 to avoid being lynched); and some student workers were shot (SNCC Field Work in Mississippi).

Freedom Rides

The Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) started the rides in April 1961. The goal of the freedom rides was to challenge segregation on interstate buses and in bus terminals (Carson, 1991; Ransby, 2003; Sitton, 1961). Trailways and Greyhound bus terminals were picketed in protest against segregated facilities and racial discrimination ("Negro Group," 1961). The Black and White activists faced violence during the rides especially in Mississippi. Freedom riders were arrested, imprisoned, and almost beaten to death. However, the riders continued the rides and their sacrifice was not in vain because President Kennedy and the Justice Department officials supported the goals of the freedom rides. In November 1961, the Interstate Commerce Commission desegregated all travel facilities (Ransby, 2003). The significance of the freedom rides is that the small group of riders was able to bring national attention to the plight of Blacks living in the South, as well as to highlight the collectivism of the riders as they faced violence.

A growing sense of the depth of the fear that Blacks in the South felt convinced SNCC that someone would have to take the freedom movement to the millions of exploited, disfranchised, and degraded Blacks of the Black Belt ("This is SNCC," 1960). During the spring of 1961, SNCC activists became organizers and protestors. SNCC activists joined the "freedom rides," which were direct protest action against segregation during the Kennedy administration. Representatives from the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, Nashville Christian Leadership Council, the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee, and the Congress of Racial Equality formed the Freedom Ride Coordinating Committee (Sitton, 1961).

The use of nonviolence direct action, the merging of CORE and SNCC in the freedom rides, and the involvement of White activists in the civil rights struggle for desegregation all pointed to a future and a society that seemed possible. Ransby (2003) states, after the 1961 freedom rides, SNCC members were seen as the civil rights movement's "shock troops" because of the activists' ability to quickly mobilize people to mass direct action wherever there were racial conflicts: Birmingham in 1963, Selma in 1965, and James Meredith's 1966 short one-man march from Memphis, Tennessee, to Jackson, Mississippi (Carson, 1981; Ransby, 2003).

Although Ella Baker did not participate directly in the freedom rides, she supported SNCC's decision to participate in the rides. She kept in daily contact with SNCC activist, Diane Nash, who participated in the rides. She critiqued the rides and gave an analysis to the committee coordinating the rides. She offered suggestions about strategies and publicity that the committee should look into (Frederiksen-Bohannon, 2005; Ransby, 2003). She reminded the activists that the attention and momentum from the rides were important. She showed concern for the students who were jailed and worried about how they would maintain themselves in college without funds. She showed concern for all the students and gave support where it was needed. Baker worked very hard behind the scenes. She raised money and wrote letters to people who supported the rides (Frederiksen-Bohannon, 2005; Ransby, 2003).

Freedom rides were direct action tactics that dramatically protested segregation in the South. SNCC started the "jail no bail" strategy of filling jails and refusing to pay bail until segregation was ended (Carson 1981; Greenberg, 1998, Sitton, 1961). SNCC also played a major role in Freedom Summer in Mississippi. They used their strategy of

grassroots community organizing that took them into some of the most formidable areas of the South.

McComb, Mississippi

McComb, Mississippi was founded in 1872, as a repair station for the Illinois central Railroad. The railroad was a major source of employment for McComb's resident. The railroad tracks separated McComb's 14,000 Whites from its 9,000 Blacks and Jim Crow Laws set the tone for race relations.

In June 1961, a group of SNCC activists met with Attorney General Robert Kennedy who suggested that SNCC should shift their focus to voter registration. SNCC activists were divided over voter registration and mass direct action. Putting their concerns aside, the activists, with suggestions from Baker came to a decision that they could do both—mass direct action and voter registration (Carson, 1981; Greenberg, 1998; Ransby, 2003). By late summer of 1961, SNCC went into action with mass direct action and voter registration in McComb, Mississippi. The direct action activists modeled to local Blacks nonviolence as a strategy in the face of violence from the opposition, while the voter registration activists tried to convince Blacks that the only way to gain political action was to risk their lives to register to vote (Carson, 1981; Ransby, 2003). Activists did door-to-door campaigns to encourage local Blacks to register to vote and conducted workshops on nonviolent techniques. One of SNCC's greatest accomplishments in McComb was being able to recruit McComb's young residents into the organization. Two of McComb's residents, Hollis Watkins and Curtis Hayes became SNCC's strongest local organizers (Ransby, 2003).

In the 1940s and 1950s, Ella Baker made several trips to Mississippi as a field secretary for the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). During that time she developed a network of contacts with grassroots activists in Mississippi. As SNCC activists moved into rural and small town communities in Mississippi, Baker introduced the activists to her network of contacts who assisted SNCC activists in organizing and mobilizing Blacks in the struggle for freedom from oppression. Amzie and Ruth Moore, local grassroots leaders and friends of Ella Baker also assisted SNCC activists by putting them in contact with other local activists who also gave support and resources to SNCC activists for organizing and mobilizing the masses (Ransby, 2003). Putting the students in contact with other grassroots leaders was a strategy that Baker employed. Jane Stembridge was responsible for organizing SNCC fall conference. Stembridge did not have the names of people in rural Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi, and Louisiana to invite to the conference because people in the Deep South did not participate in the sit-ins. Robert Moses, SNCC activist, volunteered to go to the Deep South to invite people to the conference. Baker coordinated with Stembridge and Moses and gave them a list of people that she knew in the Deep South (Moses, 1982). During the campaign in McComb, SNCC "intuitively grasped a vital part of its future mission in Mississippi: developing a sense of worth and leadership among people who had never been held in high regard in their communities" (Dittmer, 1994, p. 21).

After a student demonstration in McComb, all the students who participated in the march were expelled from school. Robert Moses and other SNCC workers helped organized classrooms for 120 students in the Methodist AME Church (Moses, 1982). By the mid 1960s there were several changes taking place in Mississippi. The most

noticeable of these changes was the "substantial reduction in the use of terror to control the state's Black population, a direct result of the Black electorate 's increasing political influence" (Dittmer, 1994, p. 426). By 1968, "More than 250,00 Blacks were registered to vote, 60 percent of those eligible" (Dittmer, 1994, p. 426).

Freedom Summer

During 1962 and 1963, several new people came into SNCC. Some were students from small campuses; others were members of other civil rights organizations. Becoming a SNCC member meant that a person was willing to associate with oppress people and start a new life. In 1962, Charles Sherrod went to Georgia to work on voter registration and Bob Moses went to Mississippi to develop local Black leadership and set up voter registration. Charles Sherrod used both Black and White SNCC activists in the voter registration campaign in Georgia in 1963. The reason for this was to show Blacks and Whites working together. Also, rural Blacks needed to see that Whites were not superior to Blacks (Carson, 1981, p. 75). Sherrod and his staff were successful in registering a few hundred Black voters in 1962 and 1963. Sherrod's commitment to interracial and religious beliefs led him to think that White students would not detract from the development of Black leadership. This was not the case because of the growth in Black racial consciousness in SNCC (Carson, 1981).

In the Mississippi Delta community, SNCC activist, Sam Block started a voter registration drive. Block started his campaign of "building relationships, trying to identify local militants, and earning people's trust…thus following Baker's advice that activists meet people where they are" (Ransby, 2003, p. 307). Block met with Black

Mississippians and local Black leaders and talked about their fears, goals, SNCC, and voter registration. Throughout the 1960s, the number of SNCC activists in Greenwood and other areas in Mississippi grew. By the end of summer 1962, SNCC had opened six offices in Mississippi with a total of 20 Black field secretaries (Carson, 1981). The field secretaries worked under the auspices of the Council of Federated Workers (COFO) (Carson, 1981; Ransby, 2003). By 1963, SNCC's successes were tainted by an increase in violence against Blacks. SNCC activists in Greenwood were fired upon and beaten. In Danville, bloody police brutality against Blacks were labeled "Bloody Monday," and Medgar Evers, a NAACP organizer was assassinated (Ransby, 2003).

In November 1963, SNCC held its Freedom Vote in Mississippi, which was a mock election campaign that proved that Blacks would vote if they were not forced to refrain from voting by White officials (Carson, 1981; Ransby 2003). The Freedom Vote was successful, however, there was an escalation in violence and abuse against Blacks.

SNCC's biggest project was Freedom Summer in 1964. Hundreds of White students arrived in Mississippi to assist Blacks in the struggle against racial oppression. Ransby (2003) states, "The renewed Black freedom struggle had never been a Black-only affair. Whites had been involved from the beginning. A handful of Whites had participated in sit-ins, and a larger number, many of them northerners had participated in SNCC's founding conference" (p. 321). The Freedom Summer project was adopted because SNCC was committed to obtaining the full rights of all people and all citizens of Mississippi to vote. SNCC strongly believed that confrontation was a way to pressure for concessions and negotiations that could lead to social change. Freedom Summer gave Whites and Blacks an opportunity to work side by side in unity. Ella Baker spent a

considerable amount of time teaching the young students patience and how to canvass. Baker said that one of the reasons for going into Mississippi was because the United States did not feel responsible for what had happened in the Deep South (Frederiksen-Bohannon, 2005). An outcome of the Freedom Summer project was the Freedom Schools.

Freedom Schools

One model of organizing in the SNCC was the Freedom Schools used in Mississippi. Charlie Cobb, a Howard University student first proposed the idea for Freedom Schools in 1962 (Payne, 1995). Freedom Schools were organized "to fill an intellectual and creative vacuum in the lives of young Negro Mississippians and to get them to articulate their own desires, demands, and questions…"(Payne, 1995, p. 302). Freedom Schools were expected to educate students to challenge society's myths about Black people, to see clearly the realities in life, and to find new directions for action (Payne, 1995).

Innovative teaching techniques were used to encourage students to express ideas freely. Freedom Schools' curriculum focused on courses in literacy, health, typing, creative writing, drama, foreign languages, art, journalism, building leadership, and training organizers (Carson, 1981; King, 1987). Students from eight to twelve years followed a curriculum that included language arts (reading, writing, and spelling), mathematics, and Black history. Students who were over thirteen years and over were also able to choose three courses from among the following: American history including Mississippi history and Black history; social studies that included U. S. geography and

Mississippi constitutions, mathematics, and a science survey course (King, 1987). In Hattiesburg, Mississippi about 575 individuals signed up for the Freedom School, with one third of the registrants over the age of 35 years (King, 1987). SNCC volunteers, COFO staff and volunteers, and local teachers taught the schools (King, 1987).

When Ella Baker went to New York in 1927, she organized the Negro History Club for youths at Harlem Library. Baker wanted to raise the consciousness of Harlem's young people. The Freedom Schools were set up similar to Baker's Harlem History Club. Freedom Schools represented models for alternative schools attempted by SNCC. The lessons learned from SNCC and the Freedom schools can be used to help people think about schools that will educate and prepare people to take action that will help make society to be a better place for all people.

Although there was opposition to SNCC activists in Georgia and Mississippi, the activists were successful because they gained the confidence of local Blacks. Local Blacks without an education were mobilized to try and register to vote. SNCC activists proved that they were radical thinkers because many activists were willing to suffer hardship to bring social change for Blacks. During1962 and 1963, there was an increase in Black protest activities throughout the South. There were violent clashes in Georgia, Virginia, North Carolina, Maryland, and Alabama (Carson, 1981). After continuous appeal to the Kennedy administration for protection for Blacks and the lack of a response, the relationship between SNCC and the administration deteriorated.

Albany, Georgia

In October 1836, Nelson Tift, a merchant, founded Albany on the bank of the Flint River. Albany was a market for cotton farmers. In 1840, there were several slaveholding farmers in Albany and Black slaves outnumbered Whites. In 1853, Albany became the county seat of Dougherty County. By 1860, Albany's population was made up of single men, prostitutes, slave farmers, and Black slaves. Methodist, Baptist, Episcopal, Presbyterian, and Catholic churches were built in Albany, but the majority of the non-Black population did not attend church. Several slaves attended the Baptist and Methodist churches (New Georgia Encyclopedia).

Until 1940 Albany's residents were predominantly Black. The United States Census Bureau did not provide population data for Albany, Georgia in 1940. However, in 1940 census demographics showed that Dougherty County (Albany is located in Dougherty County) had a total population of 28,565 with 15,537 Negroes. (U.S. Census Bureau, 2005). After 1940, many Whites moved to Albany and Blacks became the minority group. By 1960 Albany's total population increased to 55,890 (New Georgia Encyclopedia).

After World War II, local activists in Albany sporadically challenged Jim Crow Laws. SNCC activists went to Albany to help organized the Black community as it challenged segregation. In October 1961 two SNCC activists, Charles Sherrod, who came out of the Richmond, Virginia movement and Cordell Reagan, who came out of the Nashville movement opened the SNCC office in Albany, Georgia. Baker gave reason for SNCC's presence in Albany, Georgia.

> They went up for the purpose of carrying out a SNCC program. SNCC was much more politically oriented. Part and parcel for the efforts was

> to not only go in for voter registration, but for political participation. And it elected to go into the hard-core, black belt area for the reason, at that stage, as you well know, it was the rural politicians who dominated the political machinery, certainly say in Georgia and in most of the other Southern states; but in Georgia, especially, with that county unit vote system which gave a preponderance of power to small counties. So we elected to go into Albany for the purpose of developing a movement towards political participation.
>
> They went in and, being young, their first approach was to students. They had lots of confrontations over at Albany State. Then they also attempted to meet with some of the young people who, at that stage, were either being organized by, or had been organized by the NAACP in a youth chapter…. It was fortunate that Charles Sherrod was the kind of personality that he is, and a minister. So he was able to have some rapport with that emerging Albany group. They had an organization there that was emerging. (Baker, 1968, p. 26).

SNCC workers went to Albany and became the catalytic fuse for the massive protests of the Albany movement ("This is SNCC," 1960). Students in Albany had not participated in previous sit-ins. Sherrod and Reagan found that the people were afraid of the White majority (Carson, 1981).

On November 1, 1961, the two SNCC activists and nine students staged a sit-in in a bus station at Albany, New York to test the compliance of Albany city officials with the Interstate Commerce Commission ruling that barred segregation on the buses (Carson, 1981). After the sit-in, community groups in Albany came together to form the Albany Movement. Some of the members in the Albany Movement were representatives of SNCC, NAACP, and SCLC. After the movement was formed, several of its members were arrested on trumped up changes. The arrests intensified the already tense situation in Albany and this was followed by a week of mass protest actions. Over 500 people, including Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and Ralph Abernathy were arrested and jailed for participating in the protests (Branch, 1988; Carson, 1981). Although city officials agreed to a truce, they still refused to desegregate transportation, which led to the Albany bus

boycott. On July 24, 1962 violence broke out in Albany when SNCC and SCLC protestors tried to get into segregated facilities. A few days later, while leading a prayer protest to City Hall, Dr. King and Abernathy were again arrested (Branch, 1988; Carson, 1981). Albany officials continued to jail protestors until finally, many Blacks in Albany gave up the fight. Although the Albany protests were not a success story for SNCC and the other civil rights organizations, it proved that Blacks had collective power to challenge a social system that forced them into a position of inferiority and subordination. The protests proved that Blacks have the courage and willingness to form community movements and make sacrifices for the good of all.

The voter registration project was set up in Albany with twelve full-time field secretaries who rotated from the central office in Albany to Dougherty, Sumter, Terrell, and Lee Counties in Georgia. In 1960, Dougherty had a total population of 75,680 with 36% of the population classified as Nonwhite and 2,858 as Negroes who were registered to vote. Sumter's total population in 1960 was 24,652 with 52% Nonwhite and 501 Negroes registered to vote. For the same year, Terrell had a population of 12,742 and 64.4% nonwhite with only 51 Negroes registered to vote. Lee had a total population of 6,204 with 62% nonwhite, and only 29 Negroes registered to vote (SNCC Statistical Outline of Counties, 1960). See Appendix E for information on Whites and nonwhites regarding population, education, earning, and property owned. SNCC Statistical Outline of Counties for Southwest Georgia is a written account of activities in Georgia in 1960 for the White and Nonwhite population. This report shows a wide disparity in living conditions between southwest Georgia's White population and Nonwhite population.

Charles Sherrod supervised the entire voter registration project from Albany, conducted voter registration work in Dougherty County, and maintained communication between the counties. The field secretaries lived with local people in the counties. The central office was located on 504 S. Madison and had four very small rooms, no hot water, and a small kerosene stove. This idea of living with locals in the field was started by Ella Baker when she worked as a field secretary with the NAACP. The activists were able to get a clearer picture of how rural Blacks were affected by racial segregation and they saw first hand the deplorable conditions that rural Blacks lived in. The central office functioned as the main communication and coordination center, secretariat for the production of field reports, financial reports, and other secretarial reports (SNCC Field Work in Southwest Georgia).

The techniques for operating in each county were much the same. All SNCC workers held mass meetings at least once a week in local churches (and in tents if local churches were burned in retaliation for Blacks involvement in civil rights movement). Mass meetings were held to initiate people in voter registration work, to bring speakers, to share fellowship, and mitigate fear. Voter registration classes were held once a week to teach people to answer the various questions that will confront them on the registration form and to fill out forms (SNCC Field work in Southwest Georgia). Field secretaries canvassed from door to door to encourage people to register—often spending afternoons with one or two individuals to get to know them and create feelings of trust and confidence which were necessary first steps for registrants. Field secretaries went back again and again until the person finally went to a meeting or a citizenship class or registered to vote (SNCC Field Work in Southwest Georgia). As in nearly all SNCC

projects, efforts were made to meet and organize young people. These young people were then recruited to help canvass and help with other aspects of the project. Canvassing in rural areas was done on foot; in some large counties, SNCC workers used cars. On rural roads, most workers traveled 200 miles a day (SNCC Field Work in Southwest Georgia). Special efforts were made to reach teachers, a group with a tradition of hesitancy because their jobs were dependent on the State and local offices that were manned mainly by White workers. In Georgia, teachers were fired for joining civil rights organizations. Local ministers and other leaders were involved in the day-to-day work of the project (SNCC Field Work in Southwest Georgia).

Baker's role in the Albany struggle was very low-keyed and different from Martin Luther King's high-profile appearances. Baker assisted SNCC activists by making several trips to Albany to help local Black residents. Baker attended to people who came out of the Albany jail by listening to them and taking down their personal information, for example, names, addresses, occupations, and monetary needs so that she could assist them. Baker's concern was for the masses, poor Blacks who were struggling against racism and discrimination. Baker viewed King's high-profile visits to Albany as lessening the visibility of the Albany Movement's speakers and undermining the confidence of the Albany's Black residents.

Baker (1968) said that SNCC went into the hard-core, Black belt areas like Albany and Mississippi because of the organization's philosophy to develop people and organize them for their own leadership, rather than get them to mobilize and be dependent on a leader. Baker also said that the moment people were organized politically it produced confrontation with the authorities and this led to resistance in the form of

mass demonstration and mass action. The tremendous resistances that developed led SNCC to an evaluation of the political situation especially in Mississippi. "A great part of why we were having the difficulty in Mississippi, etc. and etc. was that the rest of the country had tacitly agreed to the patterns of racial repression that had existed in the South" (Baker, 1968, p. 61).

SNCC and the Development of African American Women's Leadership (Research Question 4)

During SNCC struggle and protests against oppression in the South, participation and effectiveness in these protests relied heavily on the work of women like Diane Nash, Ruby Doris Smith, Lou Emma Allen, and Unita Blackwell. These women made significant contributions to the civil rights struggle.

Diane Nash

Diane Nash was one of the original founders of SNCC. Nash was born in Chicago and attended Fisk University in Nashville, Tennessee (Standley, 1993). Nash was a devoted adherent of Gandhi's nonviolence (Grant, 1998). In Mary King's (1987) *Freedom Song*, King, an SNCC activist, describes the ideological nucleus that held Diane Nash, John Lewis, Marion Barry, and Bernard Lafayette (SNCC Nashville activists) together. At Fisk University, Nash and the other SNCC students studied Mohandas Gandhi's two major doctrines: nonviolence resistance and civil disobedience (King, 1987). Nash and the other students traced the origin of nonviolence to the Hindu concept of nonviolence known as ahisma. Nash and her friends learned that while Gandhi was in a South African jail in 1906, he had read the Henry David Thoreau's essay "On Civil

Disobedience." This essay protested the United States government's role in slavery and the war in Mexico (King, 1987). Also, this essay greatly affected Gandhi's thinking. Gandhi's thinking was also affected by his meditation on Christianity and nonviolence, especially the New Testament Passage, Matthews 5:38-42 in which Christ told his disciples to turn the other cheek to their offenders (King, 1987). Nash and her friends learned that Gandhi wanted to become a Christian but was turned away from the Dutch Reform Church in South Africa because he was colored (King, 1987). In their studies on nonviolence, the Nashville group did an analysis of Christ's messages, the Montgomery Bus Boycott, and writings of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. (King, 1987). Although they did not know this, Nash and her friends' studies on nonviolence foreshadowed the student movement and the civil rights activities that followed.

Nash joined SNCC because she experienced segregation when she moved to Nashville (Petty, 1996; Standley, 1993). Nash led student protests against segregation in Nashville. When Nash attended the Raleigh Convention in North Carolina, she was still uncertain about her abilities as a leader (Ransby, 2003). She was young and trying to figure out adult identities in a new way. Nash wanted assurance and affirmation. Ella Baker provided both. Nash saw in Baker a Black model of female leadership; a woman that she had a great deal of respect for and someone that she was able to trust. Nash was drawn to Baker's humanistic approach and eloquent command of language (Ransby, 2003). Nash states:

> I never had to worry about where Ella Baker was coming from…and I turned to her frequently, because she could emotionally pick me up…She was just tremendously helpful…Very often she was the person who was able to make us see, and work together…She really strengthened us as individuals and she also strengthened our organization (Hampton & Fayer, 1992, p. 62).

Nash was an ardent supporter of the Freedom Rides. She told James Farmer who was the leader of CORE that if violence stops the Freedom Rides, "the movement is dead" (Griggs-Fleming, 2001, p. 200). Although the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) deserves much credit for beginning the Freedom Rides, after CORE withdrew from the rides, Nash and Ruby Doris Smith were largely responsible for getting SNCC involved. Nash, who later became SNCC's first paid field staff member, was determined to keep the rides going and organized a group of students in her college town. Nash and her peers continued the Rides to Birmingham, Montgomery, and through Mississippi (Griggs-Fleming, 2001; Carson, 1981).

Ruby Doris Smith

Ruby Doris Smith was one of the major figures in SNCC. She was one of the earliest activists in SNCC and she played a major role in the organization. Ruby Doris Smith was an influential member of SNCC. Smith attended Spelman College in Atlanta, Georgia where she participated in the Atlanta sit-ins in 1960 (King, 1987). She attended the founding conference of SNCC in Raleigh, North Carolina.

After the Rock Hill, North Carolina sit-ins in 1961, Ruby Doris Smith, Diane Nash, Charles Sherrod, and Charles Jones traveled to Rock Hill to join the students in jail as a part of SNCC " 'jail no bail,' strategy" (Giddings, 1984, p. 278; Petty, 1996, p. 222). The students were called the "Rock Hill Four." They spent thirty-two days in jail to show their solidarity with other sit-in students as well as to show the effectiveness of SNCC " 'jail no bail strategy'" (Giddings, 1984; Petty, 1996).

On May 1, 1961 Smith played an important role in the Freedom Rides. Because of Smith's courageous action, SNCC took over the rides. Smith acted quickly to save the

Freedom Rides by raising money for the rides to continue. When CORE pulled out of the Freedom Rides because they were too dangerous, Smith telephoned SNCC affiliates at campuses across the south to get support to continue the rides (King, 1987; Petty, 1996). Despite the fact that many Blacks were reluctant to join her lest the rides might be too dangerous, Smith still collected money to fly to Birmingham to join the effort (Griggs-Fleming, 2001). The student activists continued the rides through bloodthirsty crowds in Montgomery and Jackson. Throughout the summer of 1961, over 300 Black and White students participated in the Freedom Rides. Many of them were jailed in Parchman prison for 45 days (King, 1987). The Freedom Rides served as a turning point for many SNCC members, including Smith, as they were ready to progress even further South in the struggle against racial oppression.

During 1961 and 1962, Smith and other students staged several demonstrations in Atlanta. Smith became a fulltime staff member of SNCC in 1962 and worked in the SNCC Atlanta office as assistant to James Forman, SNCC chairperson. Smith was responsible for administering the organization (Griggs-Fleming, 2001). Her colleagues at SNCC said that Smith gave 100% of her time to the movement. She was efficient with a flexible and creative approach. She was tough when she needed to be so and very responsible. She was a good negotiator (Griggs-Fleming, 2001; Petty, 1996).

Ruby Doris Smith devoted a number of years to fighting segregation. She was seventeen years old when she joined SNCC. In 1966 she became executive secretary of SNCC and in 1967 succumbed to a cancer. Smith suffered from cumulative health problems and traumas that began in the Rock Hill jail. Smith's health continued to deteriorate by incarceration due to civil rights participation and lack of proper medical

treatment (King, 1987). Doris Smith died at the age of twenty-six in 1967 (Giddings, 1984).

Lou Emma Allen

Some of the most important women who helped SNCC were the elderly Black women who fed, housed, and cared for the activists. These elderly women were the backbone of leadership in local movements and they acted as role models for SNCC activists. The hospitality that these women offered strengthened SNCC activists to continue the fight to end segregation for Blacks.

Lou Emma Allen was a cleaning woman who lived in an alley in Greenwood, Mississippi. Allen was born in Carroll County, Mississippi in 1913 and started school there. At 15 years old, she moved to Memphis and finished seventh and eighth grades. After finishing school, Allen married a Baptist minister and moved to Greenwood. After the death of her husband in 1944, Allen married another minister (Payne, 1989). Although Allen had very little education, she was able to read. Allen was a leader and pillar of strength in her community. People went to Allen to have her read and write their mail. She also read the newspapers and told people what they said. Because of this activity she was given the name “town crier” (Payne, 1989). Her neighbors respected her and she was able to influence them with her sound advice.

After Emmett Till was killed, Allen joined the NAACP. In the 1960s, Allen became involved in the civil rights movement and SNCC through her son Thomas who was a student at Campbell College in Jackson. Campbell College was the college that took in the McComb students who were put out of school for participating in the student civil rights movement (Payne, 1989). Allen attended mass meetings and helped in every

way that was possible. Due to Allen's involvement in the civil rights movement, she lost several cleaning jobs. This did not deter her she continued to participate assisting NAACP and SNCC activists. She was one of those women who established the emotional tone of the movement. Payne (1989) states that Allen was a workingwoman of very moderate education who had high aspirations for all her children. She was one of those women who became a leader by her actions—helping her neighbors. Allen was very loving and open, helpful, and very supportive of the activists.

> For all her cheerful, motherly bearing, she would not hesitate…to call a fool a fool to his face—which captures another theme that runs through descriptions of the local women in the movement—Mrs. Hammer, say, or Victoria Gray or Annie Devine to mention the women best known at the state level (Payne, 1989, p. 194).

Unita Blackwell

Unita Blackwell lived in Issaquena County near the southern tip of the Delta area. In 1964, the homes in Issaquena did not have electricity and some of the Blacks who lived there were tenant farmers who worked the land in exchange for rent; a credit system that did not give them much chance for working their way out of this debt (King, 1987). Issaquena County was so rural that Blackwell lit her house with kerosene, did not have a telephone number or address when SNCC activist Mary King visited her in the summer of 1964 (King, 1987).

Unita Blackwell was one of SNCC's organizers. She was the mother of five children and an active church worker when she became involved in SNCC in 1964. She went to work for SNCC in voter registration encouraging the people of Mayersville, Mississippi to vote (Crawford, 1993; King, 1987). SNCC recognized Blackwell as a strong local organizer. Blackwell states, "…[SNCC] told me that I had natural instincts in

organizing techniques…. I organized whole counties. You start off in one community and then you go into others. We had meetings and rallies and we would go into churches…" (Crawford, 1993, p. 22). As part of grassroots organizing, Blackwell and her husband were jailed several times. Family members stepped in to take care of the children when the Blackwells were in jail (Crawford, 1993). The Blackwells also challenged Mississippi authorities on several issues. They were the plaintiffs in *Blackwell v.* the *Sharkly-Issaquena Consolidated Lines School.* When students at a local all Black high school in Mississippi wore SNCC buttons to class to protest racism, the students were suspended. Blackwell organized a boycott of the school (Crawford, 1993). Blackwell was later elected mayor of Mayersville in the Isssaquena County of Mississippi (King, 1987).

It its early years Ella Baker was the facilitator for SNCC. The leadership style and model of organizing that SNCC adopted were those of Baker's. Payne (1995) states that women were involved in the development of policy and the execution of SNCC programs. SNCC did not support bureaucracy and hierarchy; instead the activists were willing to work with anyone who wanted to work with them. Because of the structure and philosophy of SNCC, women were able to participate in ways that were not encouraged in the NAACP and SCLC. Women did not have leadership roles and did not make decisions in the more traditional civil rights organizations. In SNCC women had a voice, they made decisions and did whatever needed to be done to help the organization, even if it meant assuming the lead and showing militancy.

Summary

Chapter seven is an investigation into the Ella Baker's theory of group-centered leadership, the significance of SNCC, and the development of African American women's leadership. When one looks at the history of the civil rights movement one sees the long, turbulent battles that civil rights activists like Ella Baker and SNCC activists fought to bring societal changes in America. Baker advocated a grassroots, group-centered leadership. This type of leadership mobilizes people to action that will implement changes in society. Group-centered leadership requires democratic decision-making and involves consensus among group members. Baker did not support the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) charismatic leadership and the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) accommodating and bureaucratic leadership because these leadership styles did not allow grassroots leaders to emerge and evolve.

At best, Baker modeled her leadership style to SNCC in her role as their facilitator and advisor. As a teacher she taught SNCC how to lead and she facilitated the development of its members. Baker taught SNCC the processes necessary to bring change, making sure that SNCC activists had the opportunity to practice what they had learned and to carry out decisions.

SNCC as an organization was successful in that both men and women demonstrated leadership styles. Baker was first and foremost an organizer and without Baker as an advisor, SNCC would not have had success in community organizing.

CHAPTER EIGHT – CONCLUSION

Introduction

"It's your vision; it's your life; it's yours to make it happen."

Dr. Alexa Canady, 1998

The participation of women in the struggle against oppression has always been important in the civil rights movement. Long before the abolitionist movement to debates in Congress, African American women have fought to end segregation and discrimination. During the civil rights movement, women like Ella Baker, Fannie Lou Hamer, Septima Clark and countless other women have developed new concepts of protest and community activism to fight segregation and oppression. Many African American women activists are not well known in America because they carried on their work behind the scenes and shunned the limelight. These women were the backbone of the civil rights movement. Their work was dangerous. They went where others feared to go. They were threatened, beaten, and shot at, yet they carried on the job of community activism. African American women activists were invisible to most Americans—Black and White. It is only recently that a few of these women and their work are being investigated and discussed in books. Ella Baker served grassroots people all her life. She had always cared for her people and strived to uplift them to make this world a better place for themselves. Congressman John Lewis states, "Baker…in the real sense of the world, was our personal Gandhi. The spiritual mother of SNCC. Without her there would be no story of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee." (Waldschmidt-Nelson,

2001, p. 88). This study just briefly tells Baker's story and that of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee and the changes that they brought to American society.

Recommendations and Implications for Women's Leadership

The Role of Women in SNCC

From its early beginnings in 1960, the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) attacked the structure of racial subordination in the south. SNCC activists met with brutal forms of White repression as they struggled to end segregation and oppression in rural areas in the Deep South. The activists saw first hand how Blacks in rural areas were kept in bondage and dire poverty. SNCC came to the conclusion that the NAACP with its formal, hierarchical leadership and SCLC with its charismatic leadership were not doing enough to assist Blacks in rural areas. Starting out with a strong commitment to nonviolence, SNCC challenged White supremacists and government officials who tried to compromise their political objectives (Lawson, 1991).

As SNCC grew, the organization became more radical and attracted many people with great passion and commitment to grassroots organizing. "SNCC saw itself as a builder of local organizations and local movements. It stressed Baker's idea that developing leaders from among the masses was more important than building their own generation into an institution" (Grant, 2001, p. 40). These men and women who initiated protests in small towns in the south, acted according to their own needs rather than those of a centralized organization like the NAACP or SCLC (Lawson, 1991).

SNCC was organized and functioned in a manner that was similar to the way women worked in rural southern churches (Petty, 1996). Churchwomen were engaged in

church work all their lives. The church was the center for mass meetings and it provided African American women the opportunity to become leaders. Church work was organized in the same manner, as was SNCC. SNCC, therefore, offered a familiar setting for women. SNCC stressed nonviolence, consensus, and absence of hierarchy, equality, and small, close-knit, dependent groups (Payne, 1995; Petty, 1996). Such a structure was familiar and comfortable for women. The structure of the organization attracted women and the presence of so many women in turn affected its structure and functioning (Petty, 1996). Women were very active in SNCC and women represented an enormous pool of tapped leadership. Women were organizers and they practiced door-to-door campaigns. If SNCC had practiced a traditional style of organizing by working mainly through bureaucratic leadership and a hierarchical organizational setting, SNCC might not have achieved a high degree of female participation.

Several women made great contributions to SNCC—Ella Baker, Fannie Lou Hamer, Diane Nash, Mary King, Victoria Gray, Annie Devine, Unita Blackwell, and others. They focused their energies on developing local leadership among poor Blacks, especially women. SNCC women activists were respected community leaders. They waged wars for dignity and freedom on a day-to-day basis. They were important to the movement. Women in SNCC helped communities to think through their problems, shape their goals, and become empowered. They worked to make things better in African American communities. The emphasis that SNCC placed on establishing and sustaining community networks and encouraging grassroots leadership supplied a ready arena in which women's leadership could flourish (Lawson, 1991).

Baker taught people to believe in themselves and to understand the power of their unity. She nurtured African-Americans to fight for their freedom. Even though she worked behind the scenes, out of the limelight, she urged women to struggle for equality. Baker spoke about the movement in the 1950s and 1960s: "The movement…was carried largely by women, since it came out of church groups…It's true that the number of women who carried the movement is much larger than that of men. Black women have had to carry this role, and I think the younger women are insisting on an equal footing" (Baker, 1968).

SNCC and Leadership Development of Women

The history of Ella Baker and the SNCC offered much for the development of women's leadership in terms of how women go about their work and how they envisioned their goals. There is a parallel in the way in which women's work is seen. Daniels (1987) notes that work is defined as those activities that are public rather than private and those activities that people get paid to do, however, women's specialized activities, for example, caring for children, family and taking care of home are devalued and not seen as work. In the same way, demonstrations led by men and men's stirring speeches are given more scholarship than the every day maintenance work in the organization that is done by women. Ella Baker described community organizing as "spade work," as in the hard work gardening when you prepare the soil for seeds for the next season. It is hard work but it makes it possible for the seeds to grow in the garden (Crass, 2001).

Baker and SNCC did not emphasize traditional leadership because traditional leadership creates a dependency relationship between the leader and those being led

(Payne, 1995). Baker and SNCC activists saw leadership as teaching and developing the leadership potential in others. Baker believed in working directly with people. She preferred small organizations with small groups of people maintaining effective working relationships among themselves and remaining in contact with other groups like themselves for coordination whenever large numbers were needed. Many of the people with whom SNCC came into contact with were already formal and informal leaders in their own rights. SNCC successfully removed barriers so that leadership that was already there emerged. This resulted in the removal of class and gender barriers that restricted leadership, especially women's leadership. SNCC worked to remove fear from rural grassroots people and gave people the resources that helped in making leadership emerge (Payne, 1995).

Why did so many women participate in SNCC? There are several answers for this question. The civil rights movement grew out of the church and women were always active in church organizations more so than men, so, it is only natural that they would actively participate in the movement. There was a high level of participation in the church by women; therefore it was not surprising that many women participate in SNNC. When SNCC went into rural Greenwood, Mississippi, the church opposed participation in SNCC, however, membership in SNCC grew in Greenwood. Once a few women became involved in SNCC, social networking encouraged other women to join the organization (Payne, 1995). Young people in rural communities also responded to SNCC by joining the organization. When teenagers came into SNCC, they pulled in siblings, friends, and older family members (Payne, 1995). In the Delta area some people were afraid of

becoming involved with SNCC, but given the tight community bonds among Blacks in the area, people, especially women were encouraged to participate in the organization.

Sociologist Karen Sacks (1988) in her analysis of union-organizing drive among African American women points out that although men did the leading, women were actually responsible for building the organization. Payne (1995) states, women offered leadership in several important ways. They networked by mobilizing already existing social networks around the organization's goals, mediated conflicts, conveyed information, coordinated activity, and created and sustained good relations within the group. Payne comments that the leadership style of the women in Sacks' study fits neatly into the role played by women in the civil rights movement. Women's active participation in the civil rights movement accounted for the large group of women who were involved in the movement. The participation of women in SNCC paved the way for other women to become involved in the organization. In the early days, SNCC activists referred to their organization as the Beloved Community referring to the support, love, and empowerment that existed. Such an atmosphere helped sustain activists during the stress and danger of community activism. Such an atmosphere encouraged women to be a part of SNCC.

SNCC and the Tenets of Baker's Leadership

Taitt-Magubane (2007) states, "Baker's role mainly in organizations was to provide a forum for people to voice their own opinions, and to assume their own leadership that is within them." At meetings Baker never told people what to do. Instead she asked questions that caused people to think about what they wanted to say or do (Taitt-Magubane, 2007).

Baker was a radical and she had a radical worldview of leadership. She operated in a political world that was not ready for her. She nurtured a new generation of young leaders and taught them the process of this radical leadership. There are several tenets to Baker's radical worldview on leadership.

(1) Grassroots organizing, teaching, facilitating, and listening.

(2) Encouraging learning. Baker was an organic intellectual because her primary base knowledge was from working in grassroots communities. She believed that the students could learn a lot in the field and she encouraged them to learn.

(3) Training and educating SNCC activists. Encouraging the exchange and dissemination of ideas. In her work for the NAACP and the SCLC, Baker was exposed to a wide variety of leadership styles. She developed a network of contacts during her time as a field secretary. She wanted the students to be exposed to the different grassroots activism as they carried out work in the field. Baker advocated for grassroots, group-centered leadership. She trained the students in group-centered leadership. The students, in turn, educated and trained people in rural communities in the Deep South.

(4) Encouraging the reciprocal process of discussing, debating, listening, investigating, and decision-making by consensus.

(5) People working in a community are in a better position to select leadership for a community project rather than someone coming into the community. Baker believed that people should formulate their own questions, define their problems, and seek their own solutions.

(6) Recognizing individual differences in people. Baker believed that everyone has a contribution to make.

(7) Advocating for the absence of bureaucracy and hierarchy in organizations. There was an absence of bureaucracy and hierarchy in SNCC. SNCC activists participated fully in planning and carrying out the actions that were chosen. A rotating chairperson minimized the need for one person to be the central figure. Baker strongly believed that the strength of an organization grows from the bottom up.

Baker believed in the importance of people leading themselves and the activists' role was to train and organize people, who in turn would train and develop the leadership in others. This cyclical process continued in the southern communities. SNCC adopted the tenets of Baker's leadership and made use of the various skills of its membership. Both men and women made many significant contributions to the organization of SNCC and grassroots community activism. Bob Moses brought his administrative skills as well as modeled Baker's idea of facilitative non-positional leader. Jim Lawson trained activists in nonviolence tactics. Charles Sherrod brought administrative and organizing skills that were significant in mobilizing Blacks in Southern rural areas to join SNCC and register to vote. Diane Nash was influential in the organizational structure of SNCC. She was a positional leader and spokesperson. Jane Stembridge worked tediously in SNCC office to keep things running smoothly (Moses, 1982). Fannie Lou Hamer was a local person who was trained in leadership. Once Hamer received her training, she in turn trained others. This was a reciprocal leadership. Ruby Doris Smith worked directly with the field staff by getting them the resources that they need. She modeled the role of a

center women or nonpositional leader, which was Baker's role as a grassroots activists. Male and female activists emerged as leaders in the different areas that they worked in. Taitt-Magubane (2007) states:

> Miss Ella had a philosophy that leaders emerge. She did not feel that you have to be the appointed leader. Her feeling was that if you were in a room and we were talking and there was a group and we were organizing, out of that group would emerge someone, someone with, in any room and if you sit in a room, and if you ever done any type of organizing, you notice that there is usually someone who will have ideas or who will put forth and seems to be, well this is the person that can pull this off and people tend to gravitate to that person. That leader emerges. So she always believed the struggle, for example, never had to worry because regardless of the time and the period, leaders would emerge for each time and period as we have gone through history.

Leaders emerge in every situation. We may not have heard of them before, they come out of nowhere. They do not have to fit any leadership model. Just provide them with leadership tools, for example, Fannie Lou Hamer emerged, and as she emerged she allowed Unita Blackwell to emerge. Victoria Gray, Annie Devine, and others emerged (Taitt-Magubane, 2007). Because of the role of Ella Baker as a facilitator and the organizational structure of SNCC, several men and women emerged as leaders.

For organizations to be successful, I recommend that they make use of the leadership styles of all of its members. If organizations are going to make use of the various leadership styles of men and women, restructuring is necessary. In American society, men and women are socialized in different contexts according to race, class, region, and family structure. Therefore, it is necessary to train men and women in different leadership styles.

Based on the work of Ella Baker and the SNCC, and the changes that they have brought to American society, I recommend when identifying people as leaders we look at

the function of leadership rather than on the formal, authoritative role of the leader. Robert Moses (1989) states,

> I got a chance to talk with Ella. She talked about what she was doing, a different concept from what King was doing, even then; about her concern for building up grassroots leadership among SCLC, and moving around, and working with local leadership to build a constituency. And the way she always put it, was that you put all your hopes in a leader, but then that leader often turns out to have feet of clay, and she used that image, over and over again, about the problem of rallying behind a leader (p. 6).

Baker believed that when the group organizes leadership, in the event some group members are unable to participate in the group's activities, the rest of the group would still be able to continue.

Ella Baker and the SNCC offered a type of leadership that showed men and women as community activists functioning and creating changes in American society. Ella Baker stated, "I just thought of myself as functioning where there was a need" (Lerner, 1972, p. 346). Ella Baker never accepted the role of a leader. She was an organizer (Taitt-Magubane, 2007). Baker analyzed, advocated, and agitated for equal treatment of African Americans in a democratic country.

Summary

Ella Baker invested over 60 years in grassroots organizations because this was her passion. She was interested in the welfare of grassroots people and she enjoyed working with them. She felt that everyone had values and that people had the ability to bring about changes in their community. Her heart and her passion were always with grassroots people. She gravitated to the students because she saw them as the new leaders (Taitt-Magubane, 2007).

Baker was a facilitator, teacher, and a skilled grassroots organizer who exemplified a radical pedagogy. She empowered those that she taught and she saw learning was reciprocal. She saw leadership as collective and she sought to pass this on to others. She was an advocate of group-centered leadership because she did not believed in centralized leadership. She believed that leadership is causative because it can change the way people think, bring positive changes in their lives, and get them to act more generously for the good of everyone. Baker's philosophy was that oppressed people had the ability to understand and interpret their problems and find solutions for their problems, in doing so they can transform their community and drastically make changes in America's social system. Baker's radical, democratic world view, her confidence in the oppressed Blacks, and her emphasis on group-centered grassroots leadership influenced SNCC in the 1960s. She was the perfect role model for SNCC who used the tenets of Baker's grassroots group-centered leadership in organizing people to mobilize and fight for their own freedom. In the process of mobilizing people, SNCC played an important role in the development of women's leadership. For a long time, Baker struggled against male chauvinism in the NAACP and SCLC. She worked to prevent male chauvinism in SNCC by guiding the students to form a non-hierarchical, group-centered leadership organization that included gender equality. SNCC activist, Jean Wheeler states, "I as a woman was able to function to my fullest potential in SNCC…I never ever felt that sense of limitation that some people are referring to…SNCC was totally egalitarian, at least before 1965" (Waldschmidt-Nelson, 2001, p. 99).

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APPENDIX A – INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE

Leadership

How long did you know/work with Ella Baker?

In what organization/s did you work together?

What was your role (activities, committees, leadership etc) in the organization/s?

What was Baker's vision for the organization/s that you worked in together?

What events concerning Ms. Baker stand out for you from your time with the organization/s?

What leadership roles did Baker have in the organization/s?

What was the nature of the leadership style presented by Baker?

How did her leadership style evolve?

What was her personal philosophy?

Why did Baker invest so much of her time in grassroots organizations?

How did she influence the civil rights movement?

What were the key ingredients of Ella Baker's success?

Challenges

What challenges did Baker face in involvement in grassroots organizations?

How did she overcome those challenges?

Can you describe one major challenge and how she overcame it?

Organizational Structure

What attracted the students to the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC)?

Was there a criterion for participation in SNCC?

Because SNNC's members were young students, was there a learning climate in the SNCC? What was the structure of the learning climate?

Did the learning climate invite candid exchange and self-reflection?

Did Ella Baker influence SNCC's members and if so how did she do it?

In what historical context did Ella Baker organize the SNCC? How did this context affect the organization?

How did the SNCC work?

- How was it organized?
- What was its philosophy?
- What operational strategies did it employ?
- How did the organization change over time?
- What were the intervening contexts and conditions?
- Did members of SNCC have a shared agreement on their goals? If so, in what ways was this important. If they disagreed, how did they resolve the disagreements?
- What goals and methods helped transformed SNCC?

Did the organization (SNCC) lead to more effective grassroots leaders?

How well did Baker's leadership theory and the SNCC's organizational structure work toward the goal of bringing change in America?

Recommendations for Leadership

Are there any lessons that we can learn from Baker and the SNCC as a model from which men and women can develop as leaders?

What lessons can we learn from Baker and SNCC about the development of women's

leadership?

What lessons can we learn from organization whose goal is to bring about social change?

APPENDIX B

Table 1: Population of Mississippi by Color, 1900-1960

		Nonwhite	
Year	Total	Number	Percentage
1960	2,178,141	920,595	44.4
1950	2,178,914	990,282	45.5
1940	2,183,796	1,077,469	49.1
1930	2,009,821	1,011,744	50.5
1920	1,790,618	936,656	52.5
1910	1,797,114	1,011,003	56.2
1900	1,551,270	910,070	58.6

(SNCC Mississippi Field Staff Report compiled from U.S. Bureau of Census)

Table 2: Estimated birth rates, by color, selected years, 1920-1961

	Births per 1,000 Population	
Year	Nonwhite	White
1961	34.8	21.8
1959	36.6	20.9
1955	36.6	23.2
1950	37.6	22.9
1940	27.3	20.9
1935	25.1	20.8
1930	24.0	23.2
1925	23.4	24.1
1920	22.7	26.3

(SNCC Field Staff Report compiled from Mississippi State Board of Health)

Table 3: Death Rates, by color, selected years, 1920-1961

	Deaths per 1,000 Population	
Year	Nonwhite	White
1961	11.0	8.8
1959	11.4	8.1
1955	10.2	8.7
1950	11.2	8.0
1940	12.6	8.6
1935	11.6	8.7
1930	14.8	9.0
1925	14.4	8.8
1920	15.1	9.3

(SNCC Field Staff Report complied from Mississippi State Board of Health)

APPENDIX C

Table 4: Population of Mississippi by Color, Age, and Sex, 1950-1960

Age and Sex	Negro		Native Born White		Change:1950-1960			
	1950	1960	1950	1960	Number Negro	N.B. White	Percentage Negro	NBW
Total	987,935	915,722	1,179,964	1,250,282	-72,213	70,318	-7.3	6.2
Under 10	270,685	276,403	250,315	260,678	5,746	10,363	2.1	4.1
10-19	203,905	206,586	208,785	231,572	2,681	22,787	1.3	10.9
20-34	188,975	130,405	264,085	236,908	-58,510	-28,177	-38.5	-10.7
35-44	114,475	79,386	244,450	157,199	-35,089	-4,930	-33.8	-2.1
45-64	143,430	149,447	206,455	251,383	6,017	44,927	4.2	21.8
65 >	66,605	72,528	85,680	92,043	5,923	6,363	8.9	7.4
MALE								
Total	479,580	440,641	589,869	621,656	-33,939	37,787	-8.1	5.4
Under 10	135,685	138,456	128,310	133,140	2,771	4,830	2.0	3.8
10-19	100,490	105,074	107,490	120,351	4,584	12,861	4.5	1.3
20-34	86,520	57,893	129,785	117,612	-28,621	-12,173	-33.1	-9.4
35-44	52,755	33,923	79,810	77,182	-18,832	-2,628	-35.7	-3.3
45-64	70,940	70,053	101,770	122,485	-887	20,715	-1.2	20.7
65 >	33,270	35,284	41,200	50,886	2,014	9,686	6.1	23.4
FEMALE								
Total	508,355	475,081	590,095	628,626	-33,274	38,531	-6.6	6.5
Under 10	135,000	137,947	122,005	127,538	2,947	5,533	2.2	4.4
10-19	103,415	101,512	101,295	111,221	-1,903	9,926	-1.9	9.8
20-34	102,395	72,512	135,300	119,296	-29,883	-16,004	-29.1	-11.9
35-44	61,720	45,463	82,320	80,017	-16,257	-2,303	-26.4	-2.8
45-64	72,490	79,394	104,685	128,897	6,904	24,212	9.6	23.1
65 >	33,335	37,244	44,480	41,157	3,909	-3,323	11.7	-7.5

(SNCC Field Staff Report complied from the U.S. Bureau of the Census)

APPENDIX D

Table 5: Urban and Rural Migration by Race in Mississippi, 1950-1960

Area	Population		Net Migration		Natural	Net
	1950	1960	Number	%	Increase	Change-%
State	2,178,914	2,178,141	-424,158	-16.3	19.4%	-0.03
White	1,188,632	1,257,546	-108,470	-7.9	14.9	5.8
Nonwhite	990,282	920,595	-315,688	-25.5	24.8	-7.0
Urban	607,162	820,805	79,545	10.7	22.1	35.2
White	374,320	525,853	75,476	16.8	20.3	40.5
Nonwhite	232,848	294,952	4,069	1.4	24.9	26.7
Rural	1,571,752	1,357,336	-503,703	-27.1	18.4	-13.3
White	814,312	731,693	-183,946	-20.1	12.4	-10.1
Nonwhite	757,440	625,643	-319,757	-33.8	24.8	-17.4

(SNCC Field Staff Report complied from Mississippi State Board of Health)

APPENDIX E

Table 6: Statistical Outline of Counties in Southwest Georgia, 1960

	Dougherty	Sumter	Terrell	Lee
Population total	75,680	24,652	12,742	6,204
% Nonwhite	36%	52.8%	64.4%	62.7%
Eligible Negroes who are registered	2,858	501	51	29
Median family income				
ALL	$4401	2950	2057	2434
Nonwhite	2430	1598	1313	1648
Median school years completed				
ALL	10.5	8.4	7.6	6.9
Nonwhite	5.9	5.0	4.5	4.0
% Nonwhite families earning under $1000	20%	28%	40%	20%
2000	40%	64%	70%	50%
3000	60%	84%	87%	78%
% Farmed land owned by				
Whites	74%	72%	52%	48%
Nonwhites	26%	28%	48%	52%
% of farmers who are tenants—White	8.7%	13.5%	17.4%	15.4%
Nonwhite	44.5%	62.5%	77.7%	63.5%

Compiled by SNCC in 1960